

STARBLAZER

SPACE FICTION ADVENTURE IN PICTURES No. 38

14p



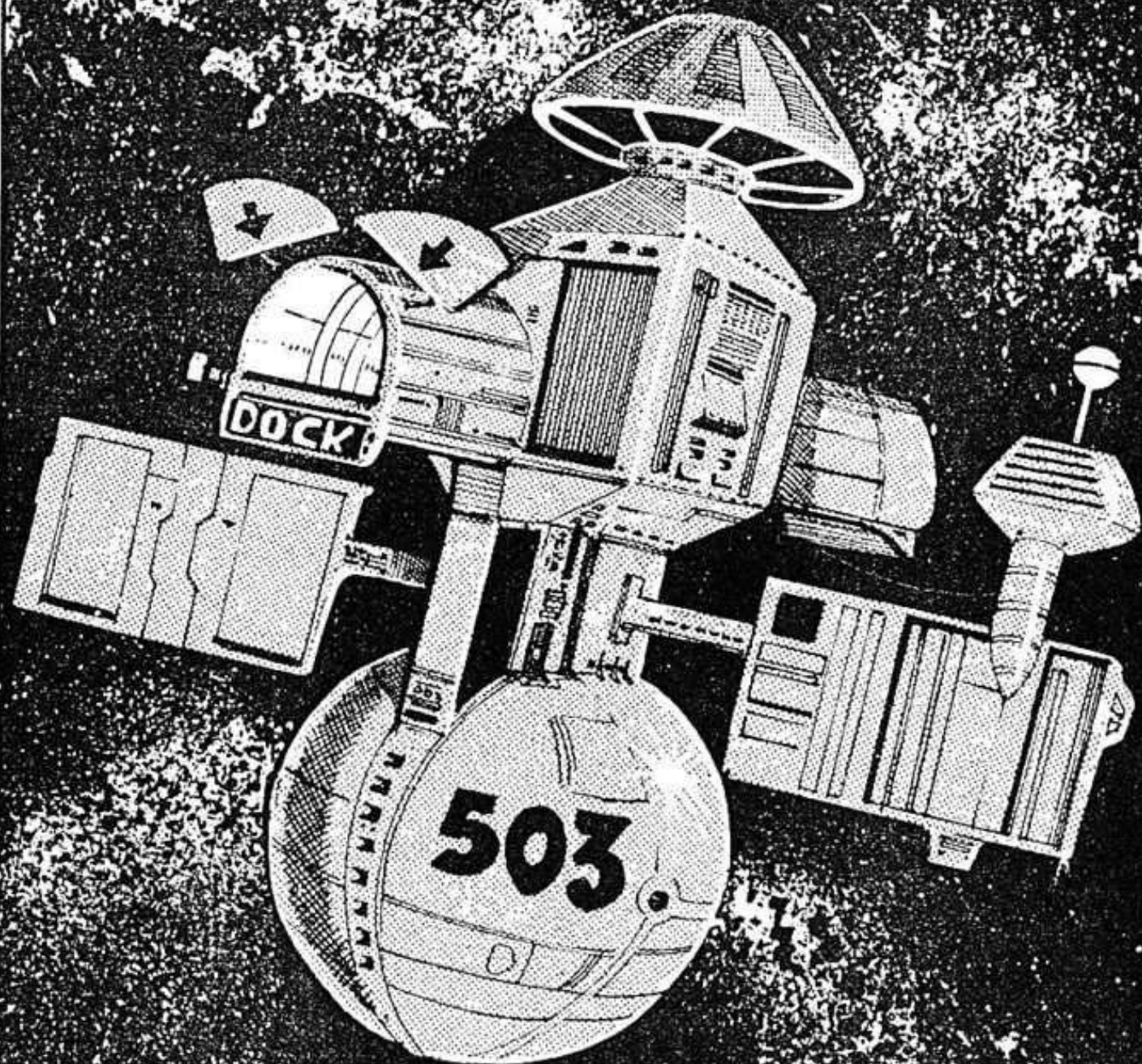
The SEEDS of DOOM

STARBLAZER

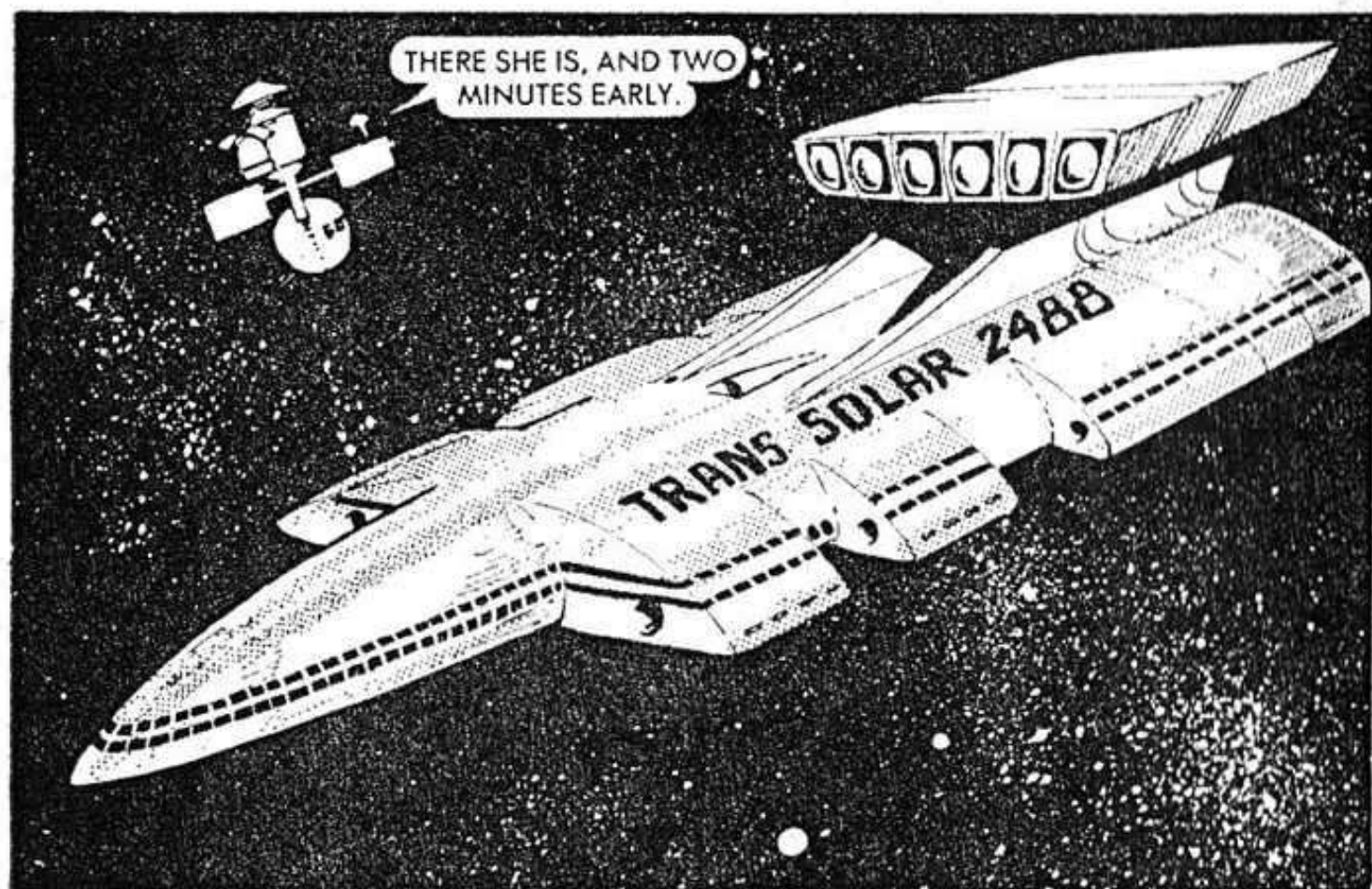


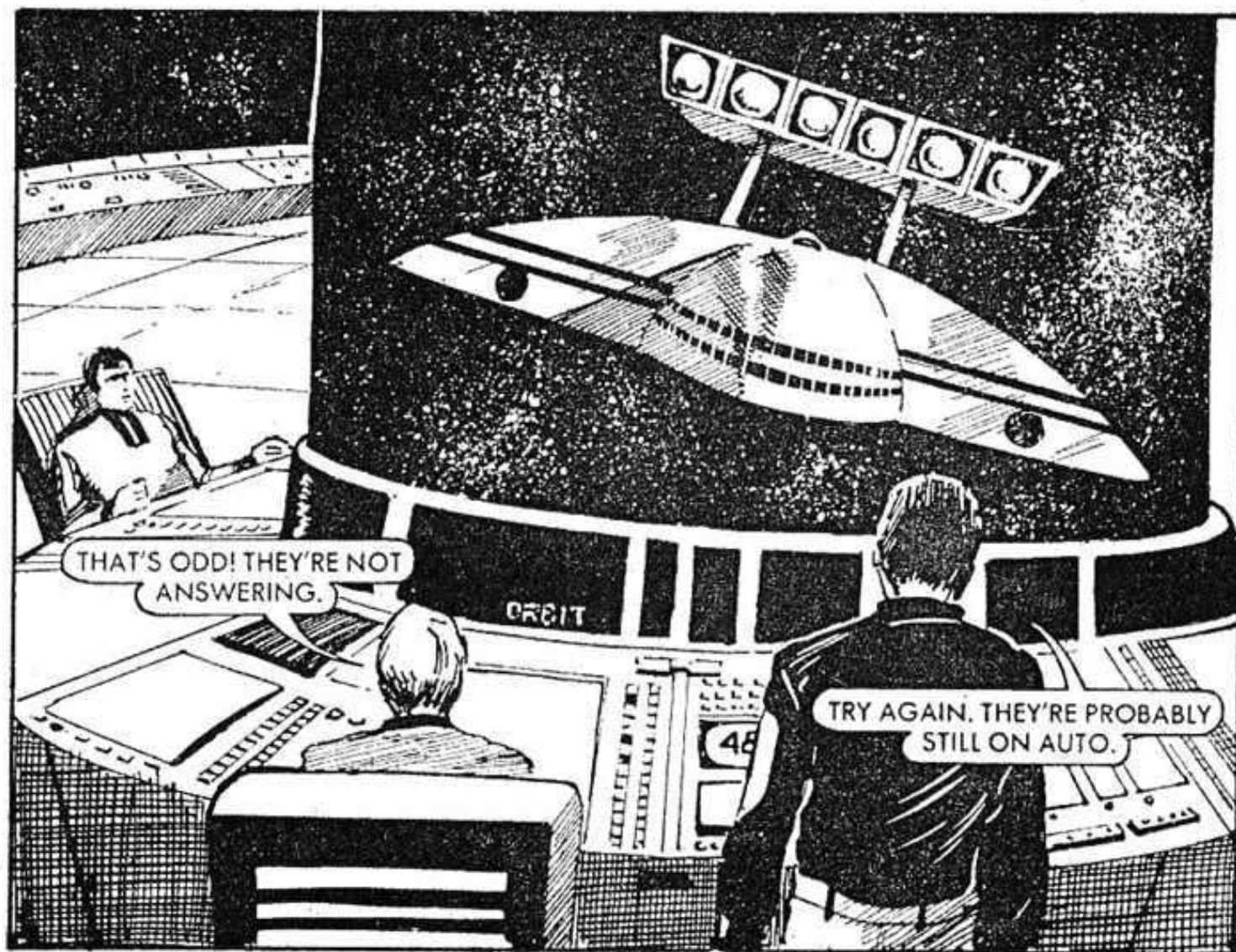
**THE
GREATEST
SPIN-OFF FROM
SPACE EXPLORATION WAS
IN THE MEDICAL FIELD. NEW
BENEFICIAL BACTERIA WERE
DISCOVERED IN FAR PLANETS,
AND WITH THEIR HELP ALL KNOWN
DISEASES WERE ELIMINATED. SO
WITH NO NEED TO BUILD UP A
NATURAL RESISTANCE TO DISEASE
THE BODIES OF PEOPLE OF ALL
RACES WERE EASILY INFECTED
WHEN A NEW KILLER VIRUS
WAS UNLEASHED. BUT WHO
HAD LET LOOSE THE
SEEDS OF DOOM?**

The Seeds of Doom



FAR OUT IN SPACE WAS THE CROSSWAYS COSMOPORT. HERE TRAVELLERS CHANGED SHIPS ON THE INTER-GALACTIC SPACE ROUTES. NEXT SHIP IN WAS TRANS SOLAR FLIGHT 2488, FIVE WEEKS OUT FROM STYGIA 4.

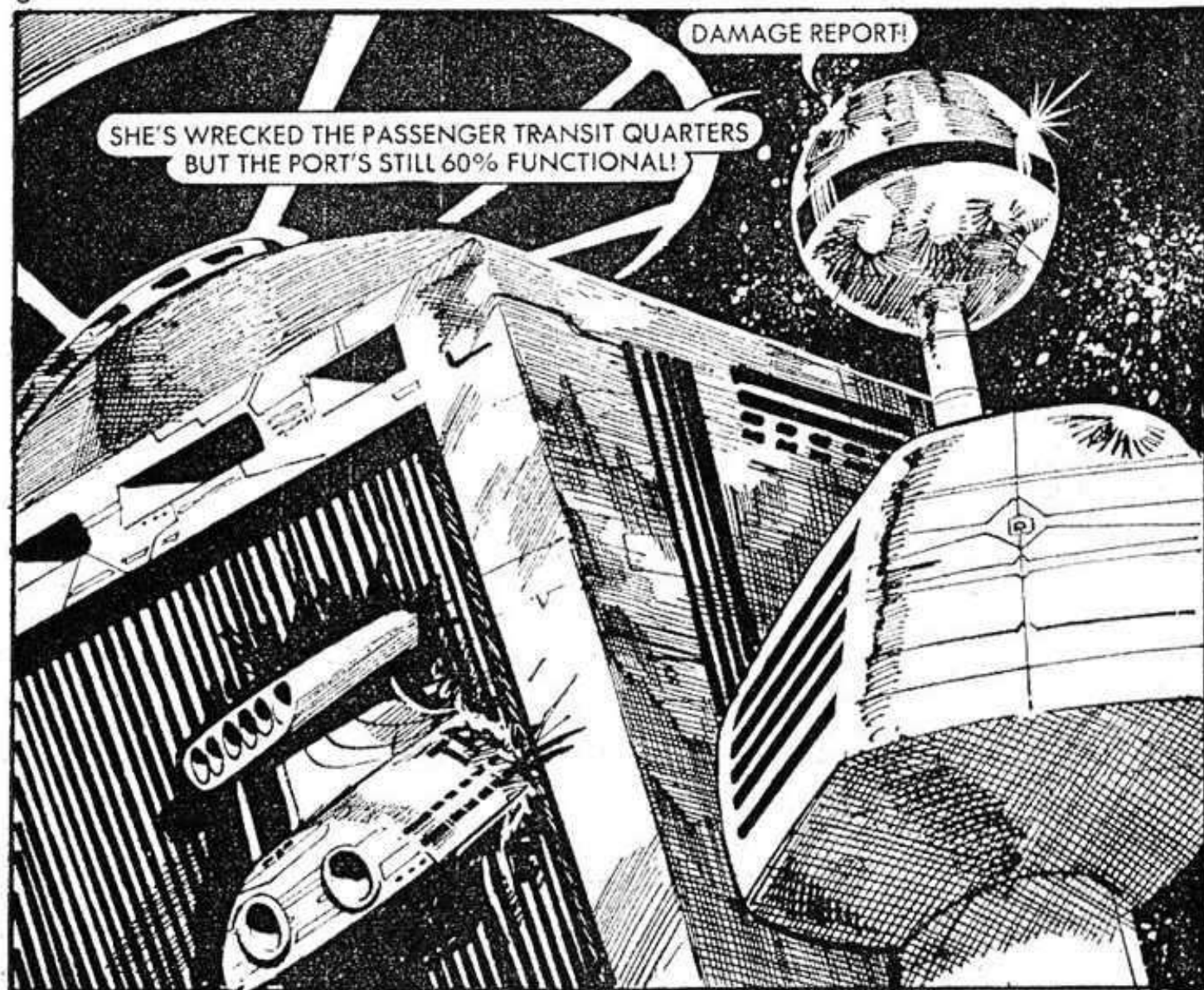






BEFORE THE ALARMS COULD RING, THE LINER PLOUGHED INTO THE PORT.





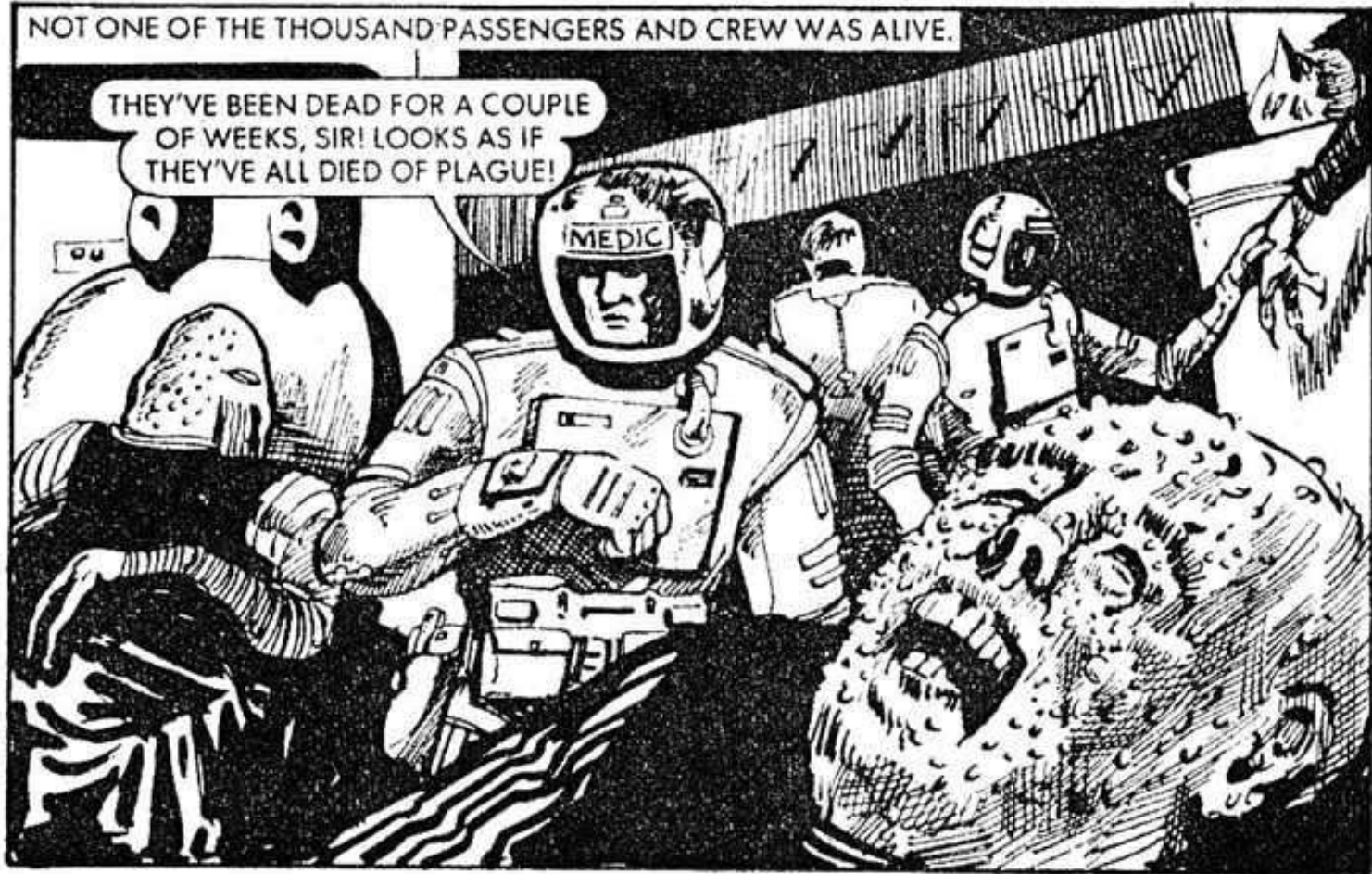
THE WRECKING CREW FORCED THEIR WAY TO THE BRIDGE OF THE LINER.

THEY'RE ALL DEAD!

AND THE CRASH DIDN'T KILL THEM!

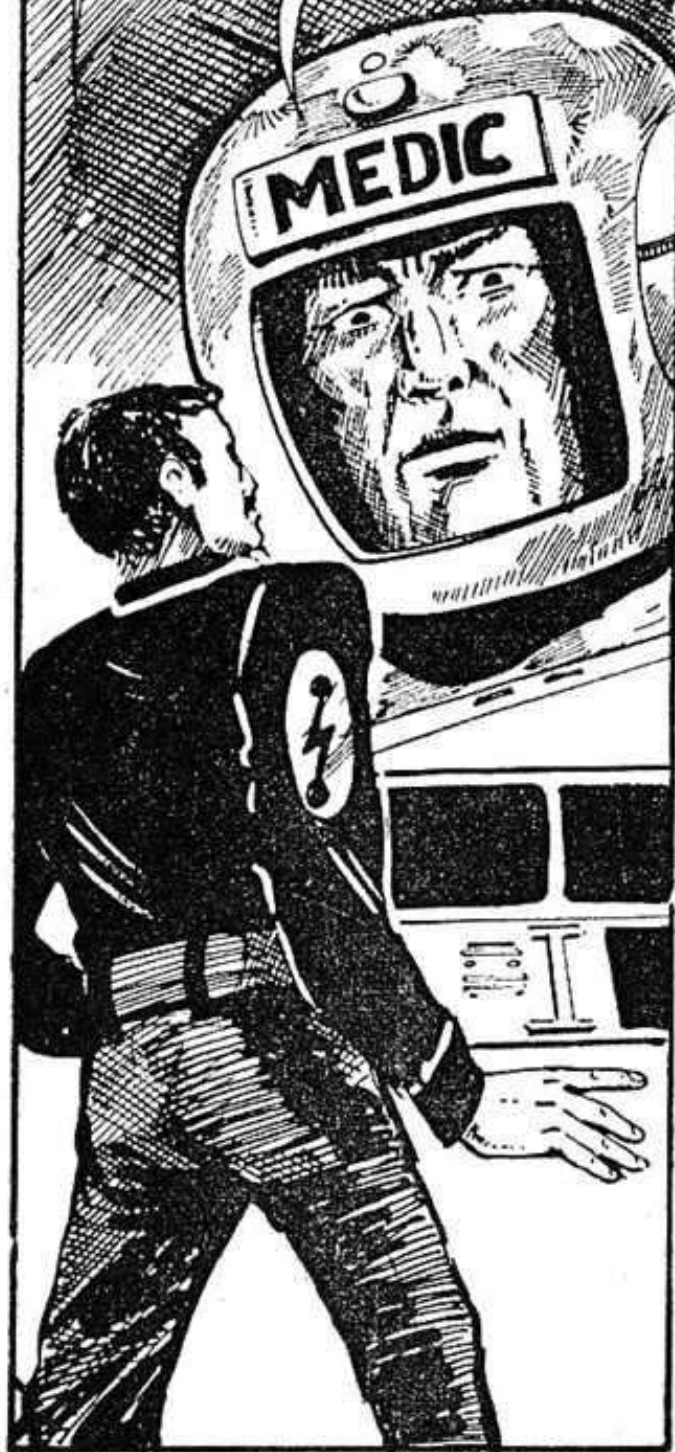
NOT ONE OF THE THOUSAND PASSENGERS AND CREW WAS ALIVE.

THEY'VE BEEN DEAD FOR A COUPLE
OF WEEKS, SIR! LOOKS AS IF
THEY'VE ALL DIED OF PLAGUE!

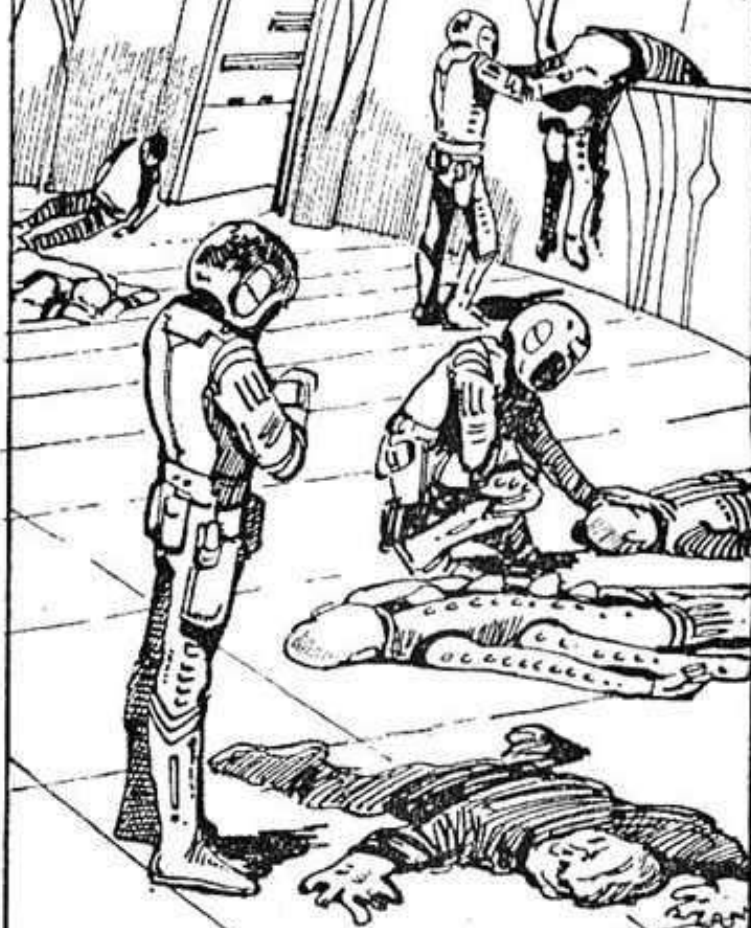


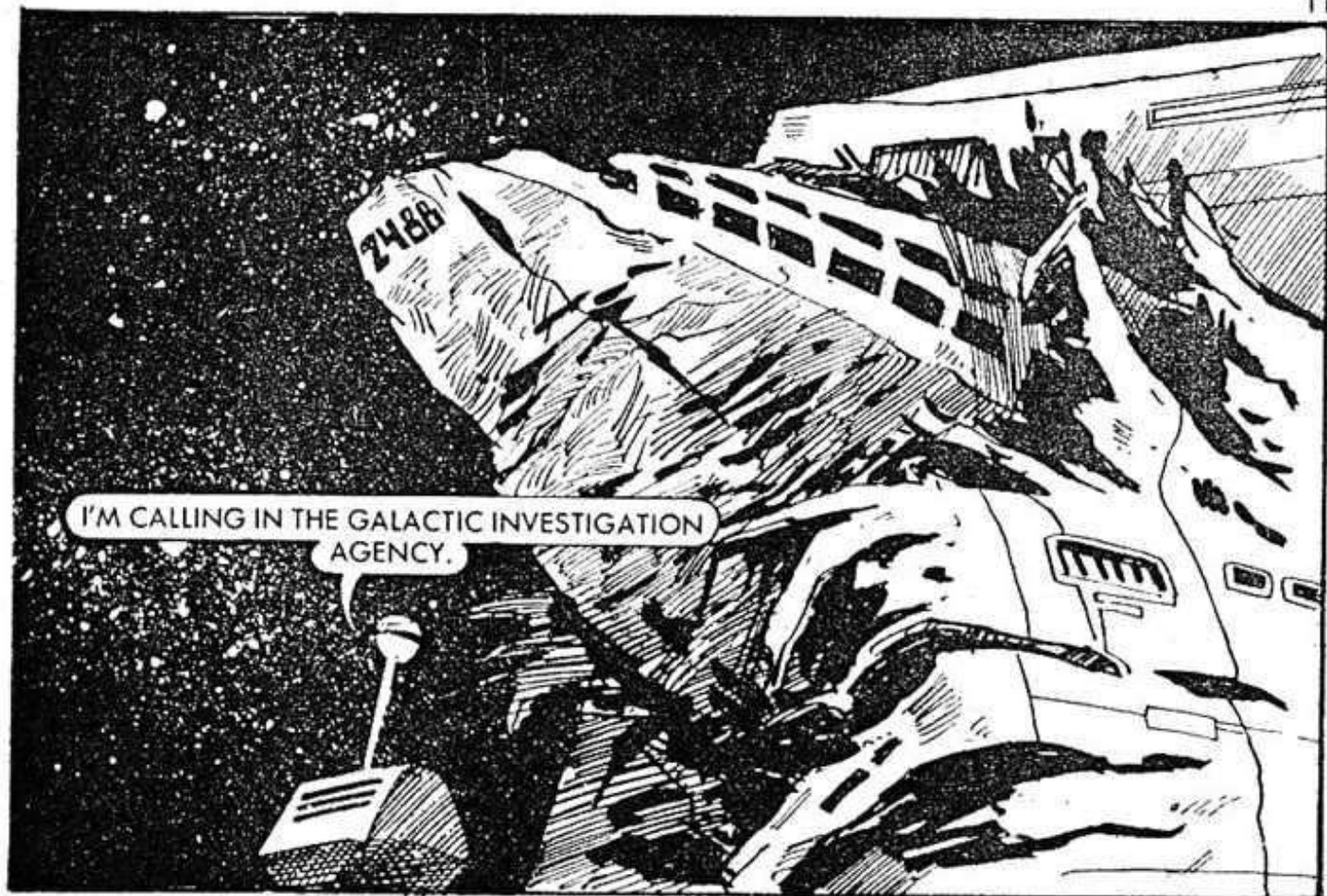
BE SPECIFIC, MAN! NO ONE IN THE GALAXY HAS DIED OF ANY DISEASE FOR OVER A HUNDRED YEARS — WE'RE IMMUNE TO EVERYTHING!

THEY'VE GOT EVERYTHING! THERE ARE EARTHMEN WITH BUBONIC PLAGUE, SMALLPOX — KYREANS WITH BLACK ROT ...

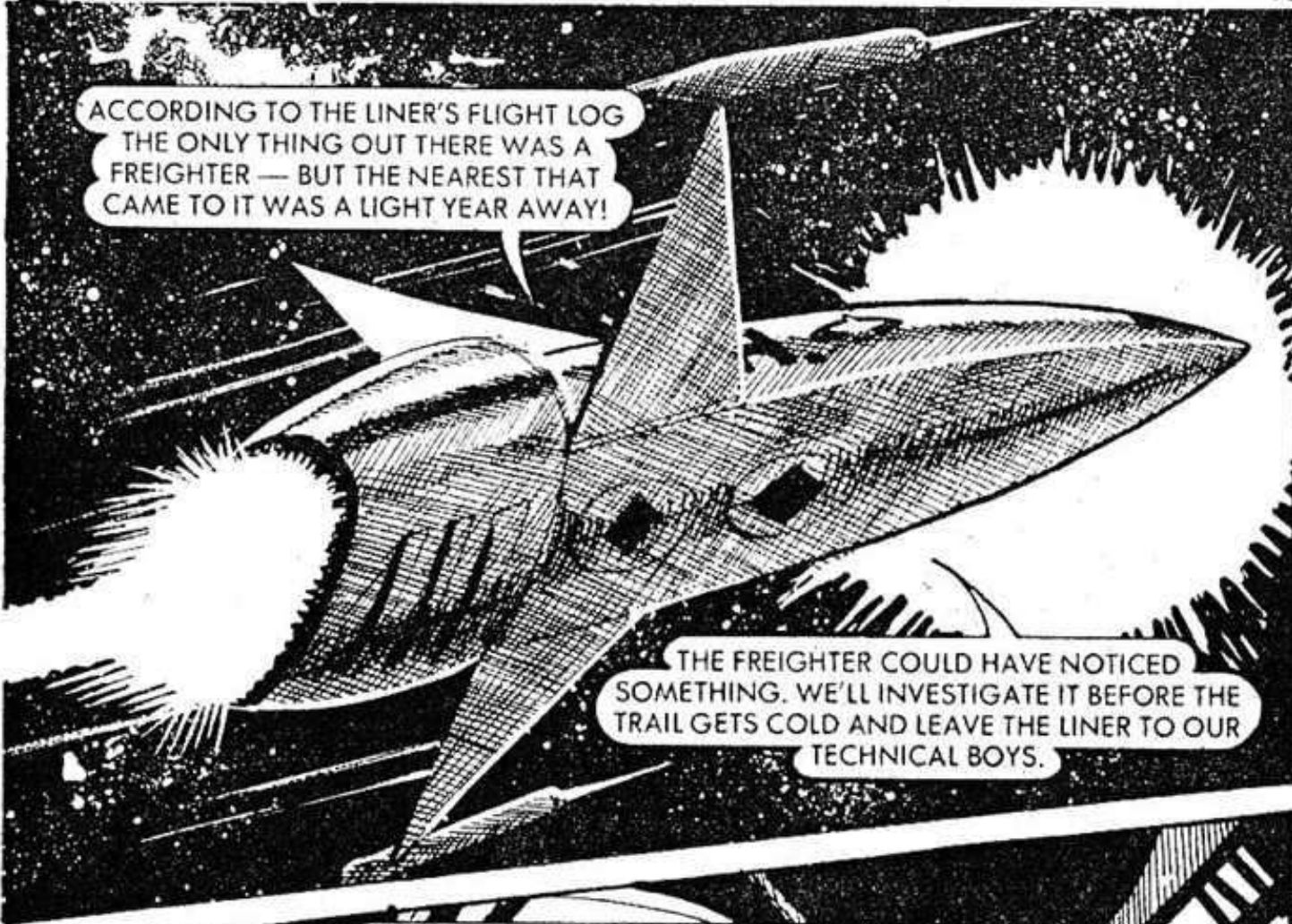


THERE ARE FORTY OR SO DIFFERENT RACES ON BOARD AND THEY'VE ALL DIED OF DIFFERENT DISEASES!










ACCORDING TO THE LINER'S FLIGHT LOG
THE ONLY THING OUT THERE WAS A
FREIGHTER — BUT THE NEAREST THAT
CAME TO IT WAS A LIGHT YEAR AWAY!

THE FREIGHTER COULD HAVE NOTICED
SOMETHING. WE'LL INVESTIGATE IT BEFORE THE
TRAIL GETS COLD AND LEAVE THE LINER TO OUR
TECHNICAL BOYS.



IT'S NOT MUCH OF A LEAD, BUT IT'S ALL WE'VE
GOT. ACCORDING TO THE COMPUTERS, THE
FREIGHTER WAS PROBABLY MAKING FOR ARCOS.
IT'S A DUTY FREE PLANET — A LOT OF HARD
CASES THERE.

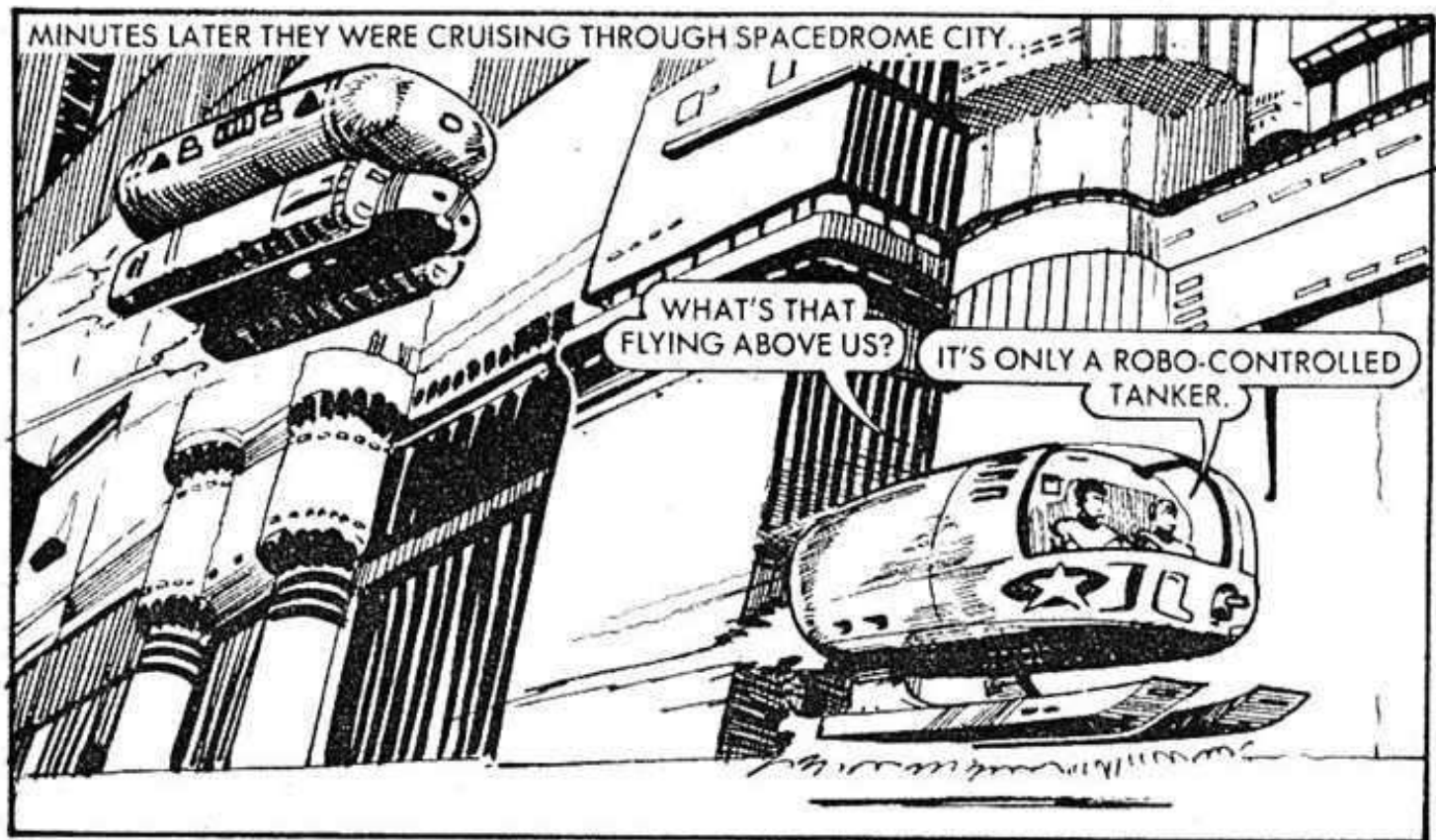
TWO SPACIALS LATER THEY WERE IN ORBIT AROUND ARCOS.

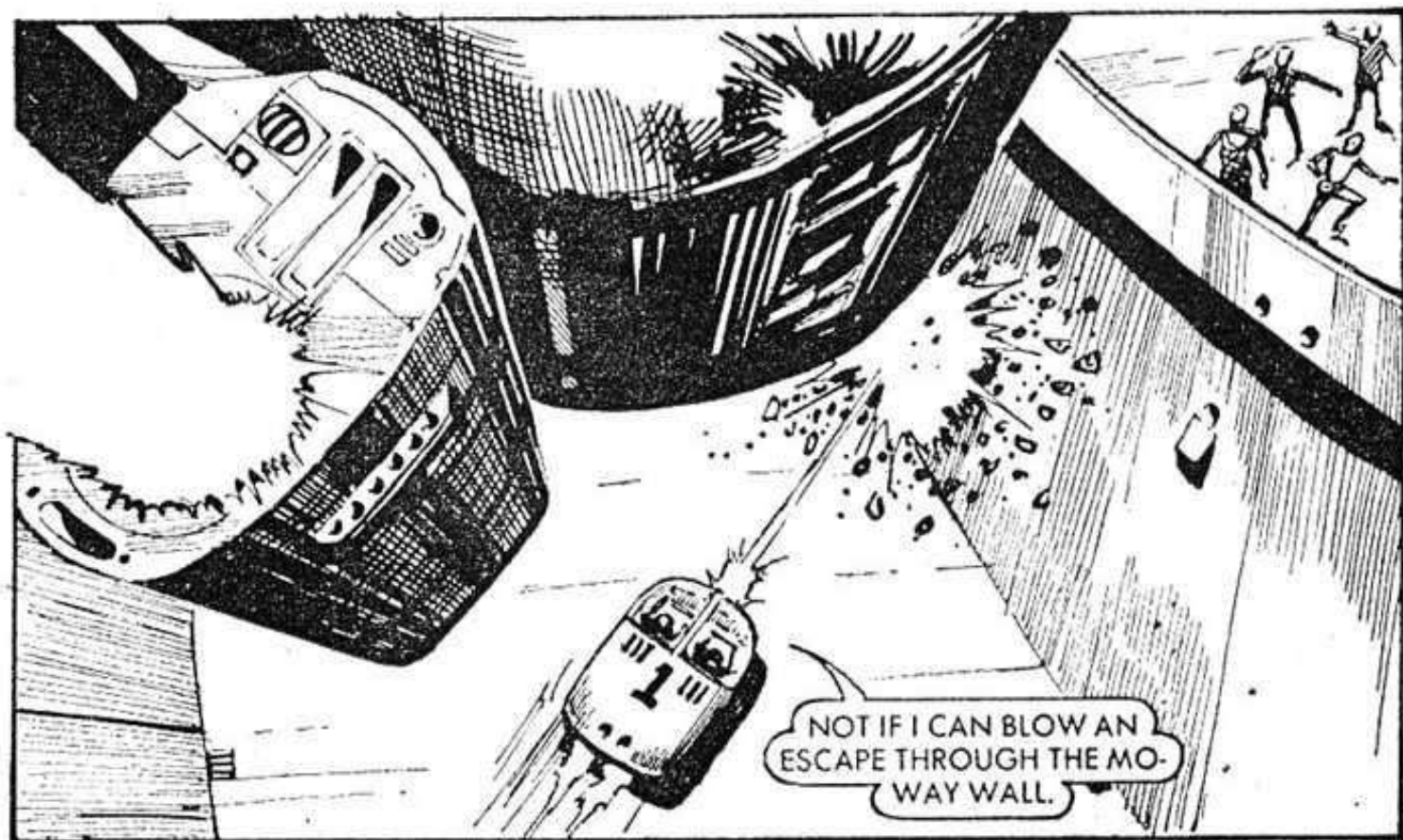
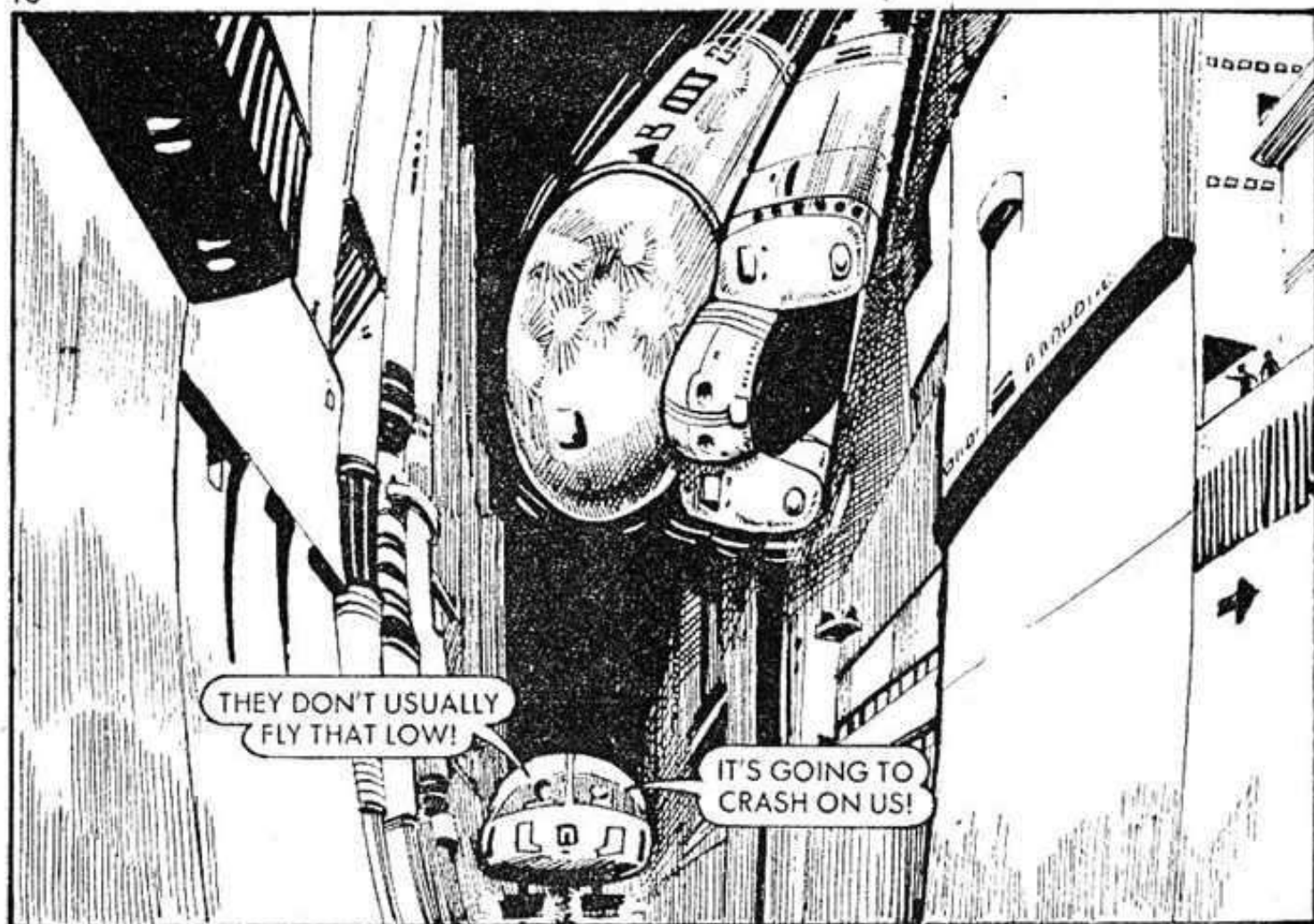
G.I.A. HERE. A FREIGHTER ARRIVED
THREE DAYS AGO FROM SPACE
QUADRANT A88/R2841. WE WISH TO
INTERVIEW THE CAPTAIN.

THE ONLY SHIP FROM THAT WAY IS THE
FREIGHTER TYGON. IT DOES A REGULAR
RUN. THE CAPTAIN'S NAME IS SLOG!

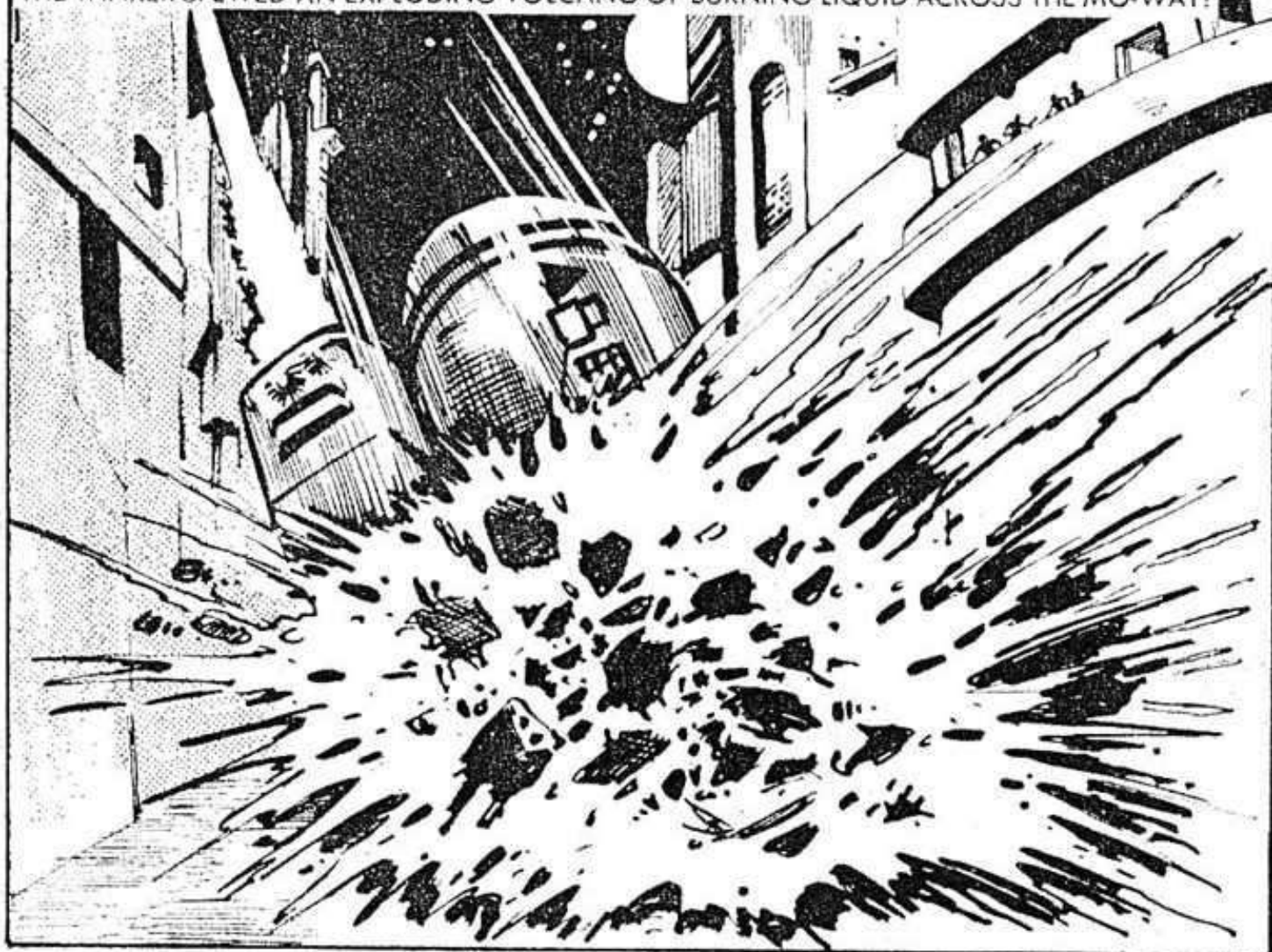
WE ARE LANDING BY SHUTTLE BUG.
PLEASE ADVISE CAPTAIN SLOG'S
WHEREABOUTS.

CHECKING THE CITIZEN
LOCATION SYSTEM.





THE TANKER SPEWED AN EXPLODING VOLCANO OF BURNING LIQUID ACROSS THE MO-WAY!



SCORCH'S LIGHTNING REACTIONS BLASTED THE BUG THROUGH THE MO-WAY WALL.



ARE YOU OKAY, TAL?

I GUESS SO, BUT THE
BUG'S A WRITE OFF.



SCORCH EXPLAINED.

I CAN'T HELP. I DO THAT RUN EVERY MONTH
AND THERE WAS NOTHING DIFFERENT THIS TIME.

IT WAS A LONG
SHOT BUT WE HAD TO ASK.





AS SCORCH RACED FROM THE BAR THE PARALYSING LASH OF A NEUTRON WHIP COILED AROUND HIS THROAT.





THE ASSAILANTS FLED.

LET'S BORROW THAT BIKE AND GET
BACK TO THE SPACE-DROME.

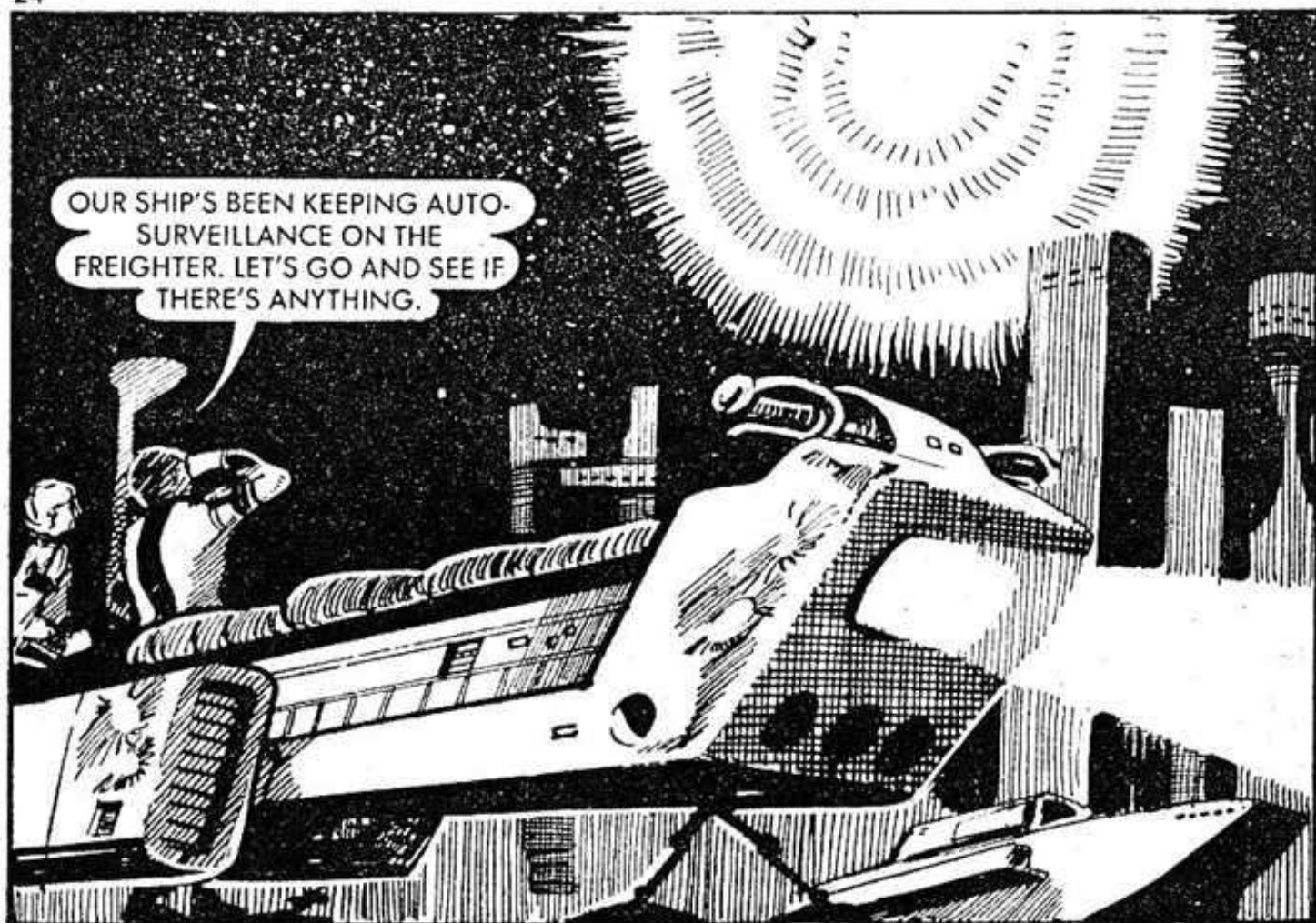



I'M THINKING THOSE MUGGERS WERE
HIRED TO KILL US AND THAT TANKER
CRASH WAS NO ACCIDENT EITHER.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS BUT WE'RE
CLOSE TO SOMETHING BIG AND IT'S
MAKING PEOPLE PANIC!










HE PROBABLY CALLED PLANET VESTA. IT'S ONE OF THE 'RANCORP' HEALTH FOOD PLANETS WHERE THEY GROW SYNTHETIC HEALTH FOOD.

OF COURSE... THE FREIGHTER WAS
A RANCORP SHIP!

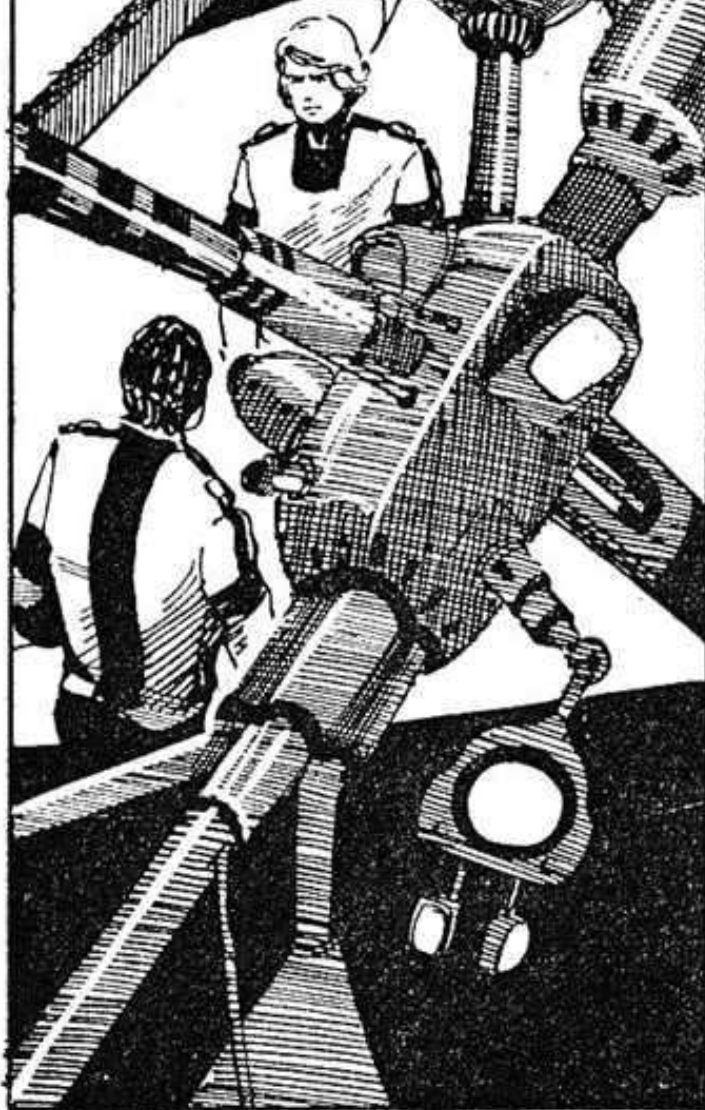


LET'S PAY THEM A VISIT—BUT IN SECRET. WE'LL
HAVE A BETTER CHANCE OF FINDING OUT
WHAT'S GOING ON IF THEY DON'T KNOW WE'RE
AROUND.

I'LL RIG FOR INVISIBLE RUNNING AND
RAISE THE SENSOR SHROUD.

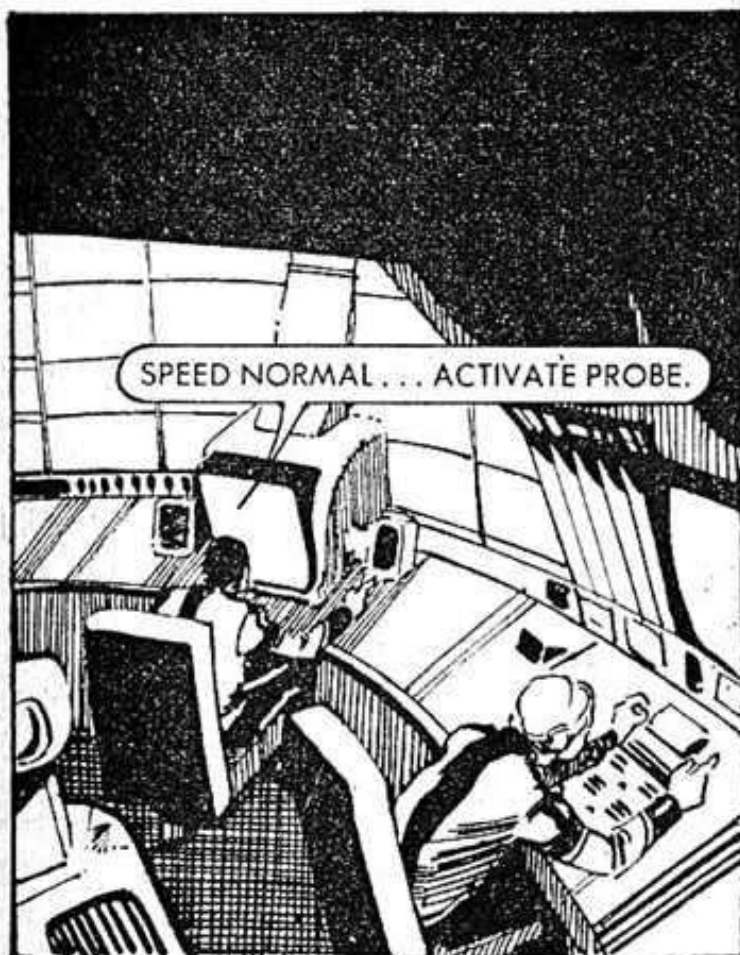
WITH THE SHROUD DEVICE HIDING THE SHIP FROM PROBING SENSORS, THEY HYPER-WARPED TOWARDS THE PLANET VESTA.

VESTA'S COMPLETELY DEVOTED TO THE PRODUCTION OF FOOD. IT'S ALL DONE BY MACHINE. THERE ARE ONLY TWO HUNDRED HUMANS AND THEY'RE AT THE ONE FOOD COLLECTION POINT ON THE PLANET.



THE G.I.A. CRAFT SLOWED AS IT APPROACHED VESTA.







AS THEY HIT THE ATMOSPHERE THE METEORITES INSTANTLY CHANGED INTO A BOILING, EXPLODING MASS OF FLAMING LAVA.



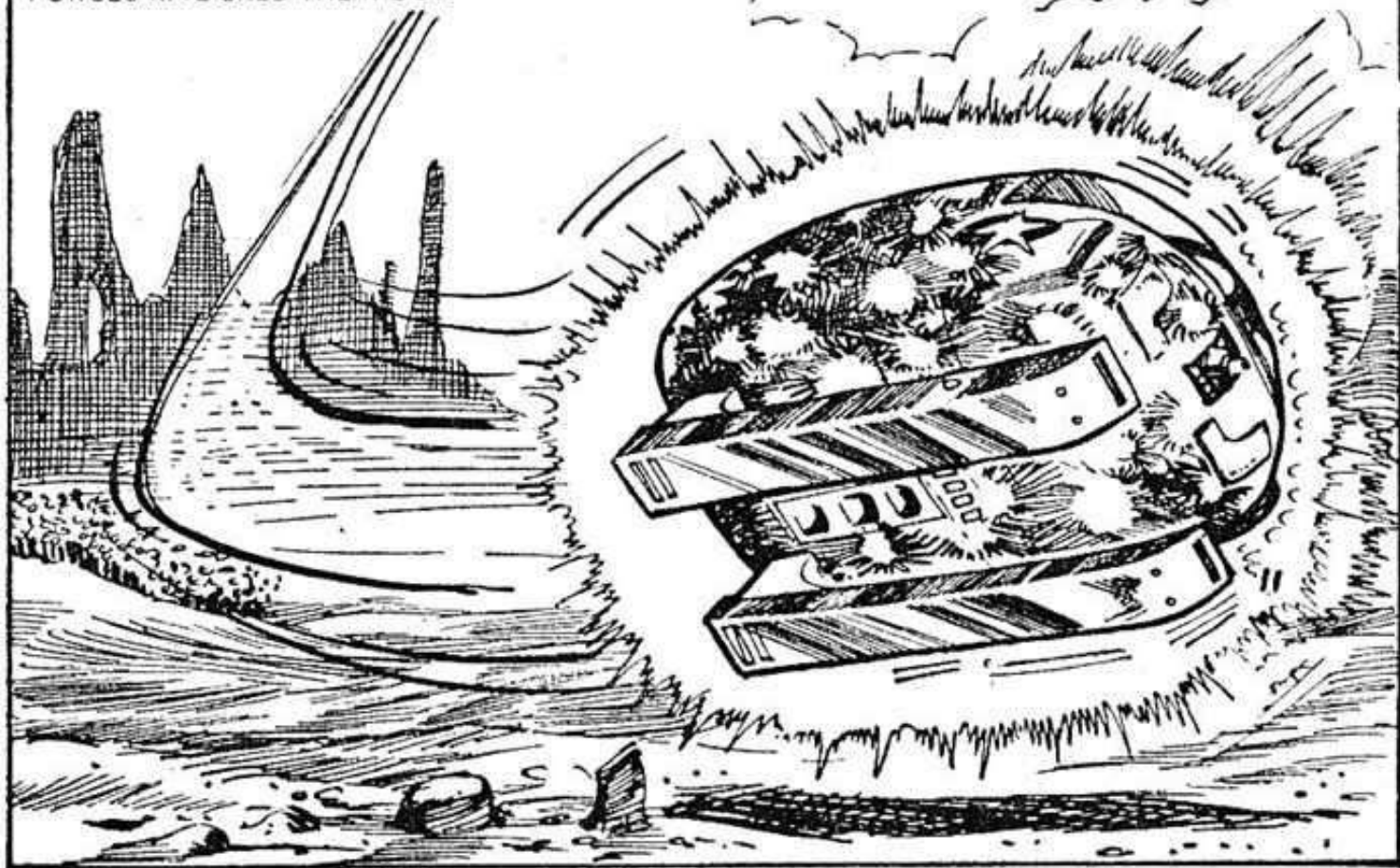
SLOW DOWN, SCORCH!

I DAREN'T!
WE'D BE NOTICED!

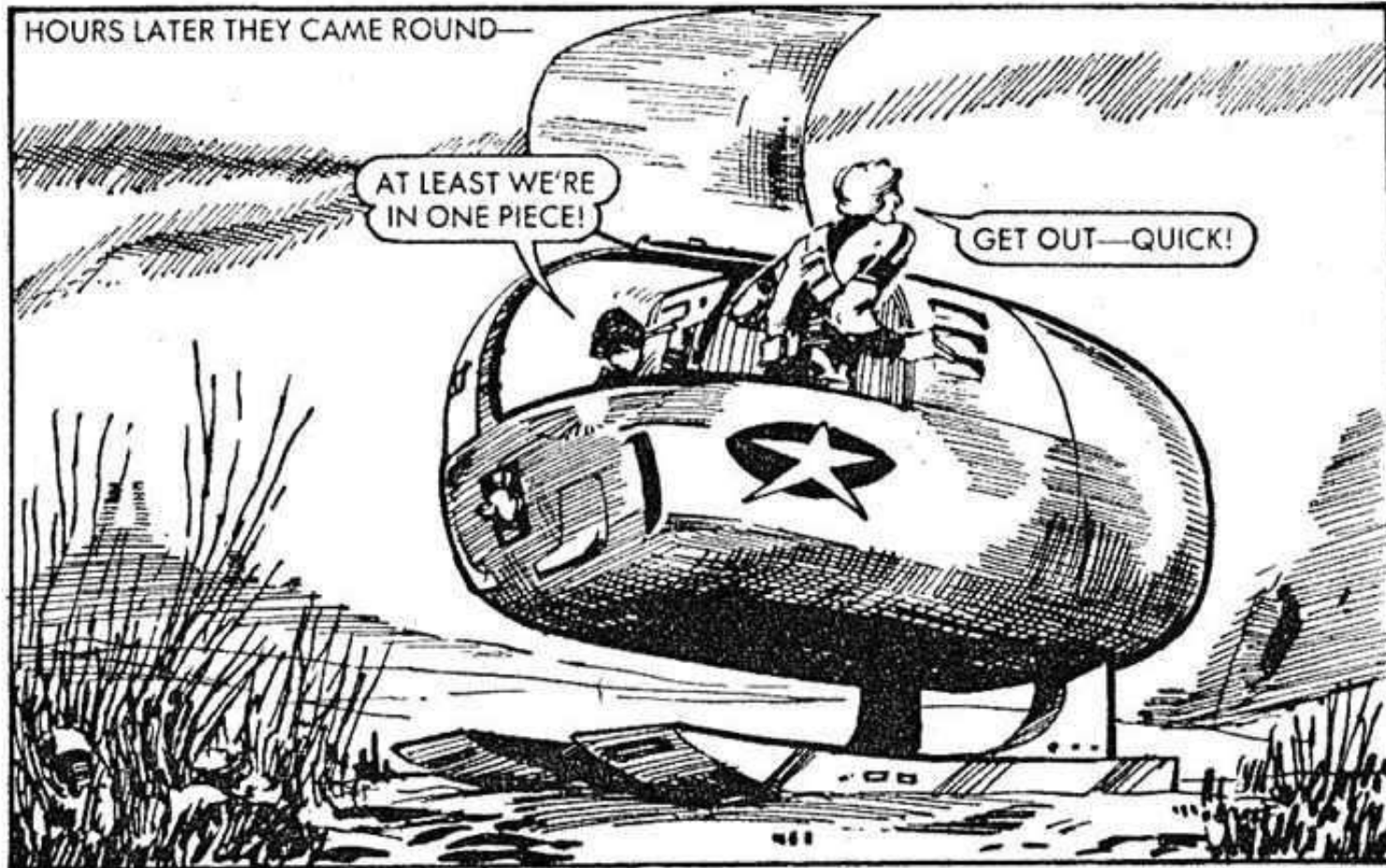


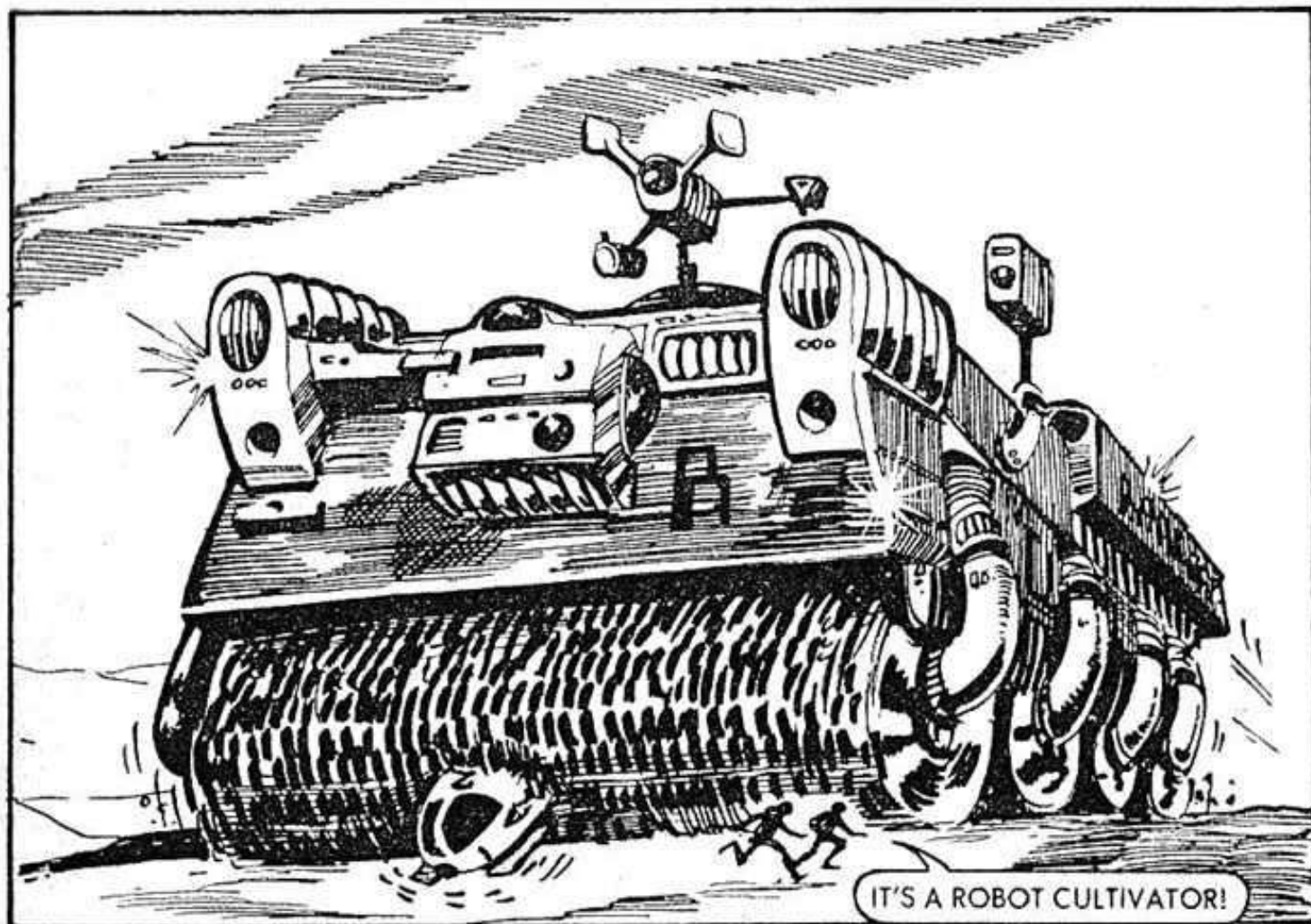
WE MUST IMITATE THE
METEORITE BEHAVIOUR.
GOT TO KEEP THIS SPEED TO
ZERO FEET!

AT THE LAST SECOND SCORCH HIT THE GRAVITY BRAKES, BUT THE COLOSSAL 'G' FORCES KNOCKED THEM OUT.



HOURS LATER THEY CAME ROUND—





THE GIANT MACHINES CARRIED ON THEIR PROGRAMMED WAY, LEAVING ONLY A GREY POWDER WHERE THE BUG HAD BEEN.

ANOTHER SECOND AND WE'D HAVE BEEN CULTIVATED!



NOW WHAT DO WE DO?

SAME PLAN. WE'VE GOT TO GET TO THE FOOD COLLECTION COMPLEX. IT'S ONLY ABOUT SIX HUNDRED MILES AWAY.

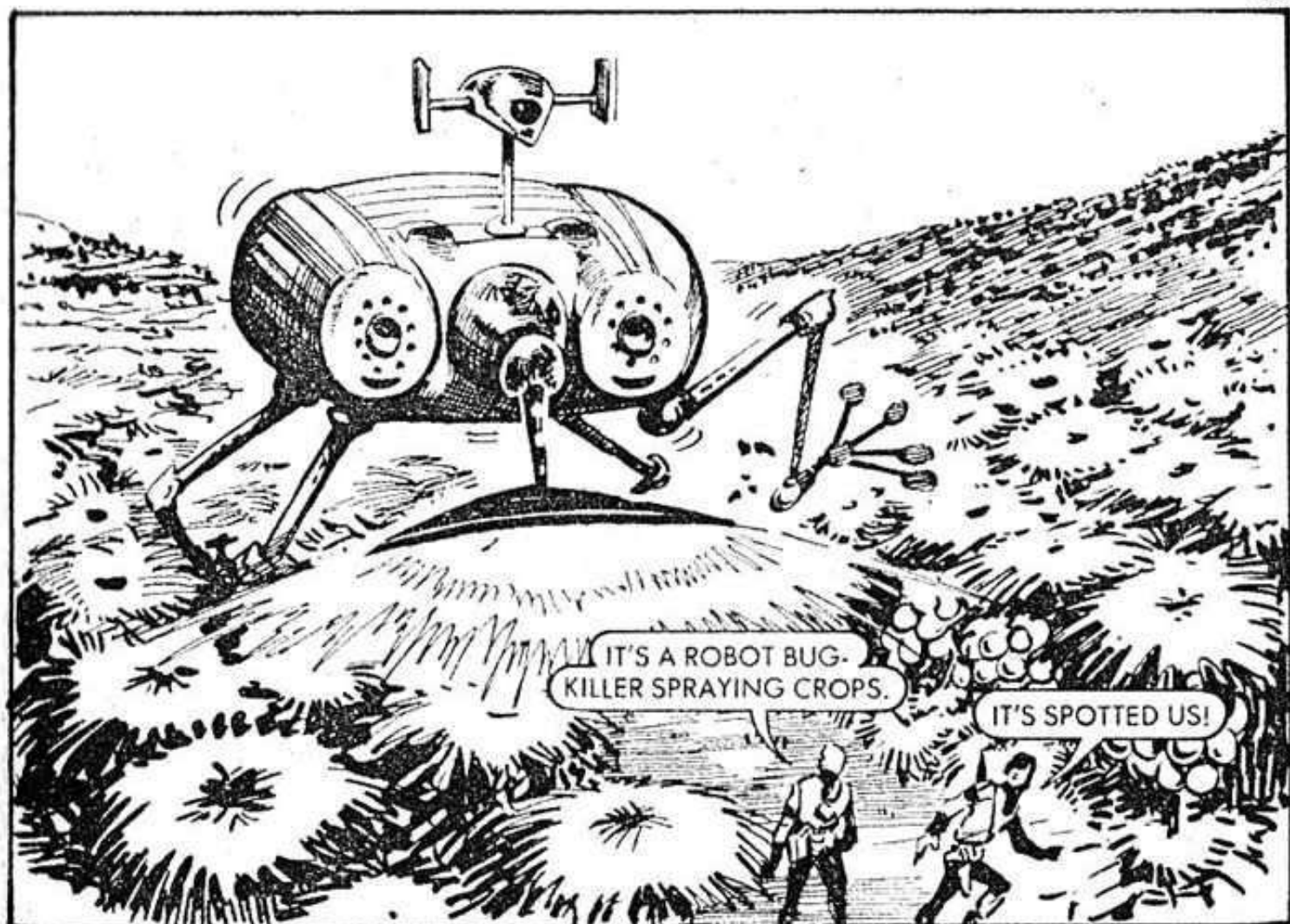
THERE'S A ROAD THAT WAY. IT'S BOUND TO HAVE TRANSPORT ON IT.

THEY MARCHED ON ACROSS THE VAST FIELDS OF SYNTHI-FOOD PLANTS.

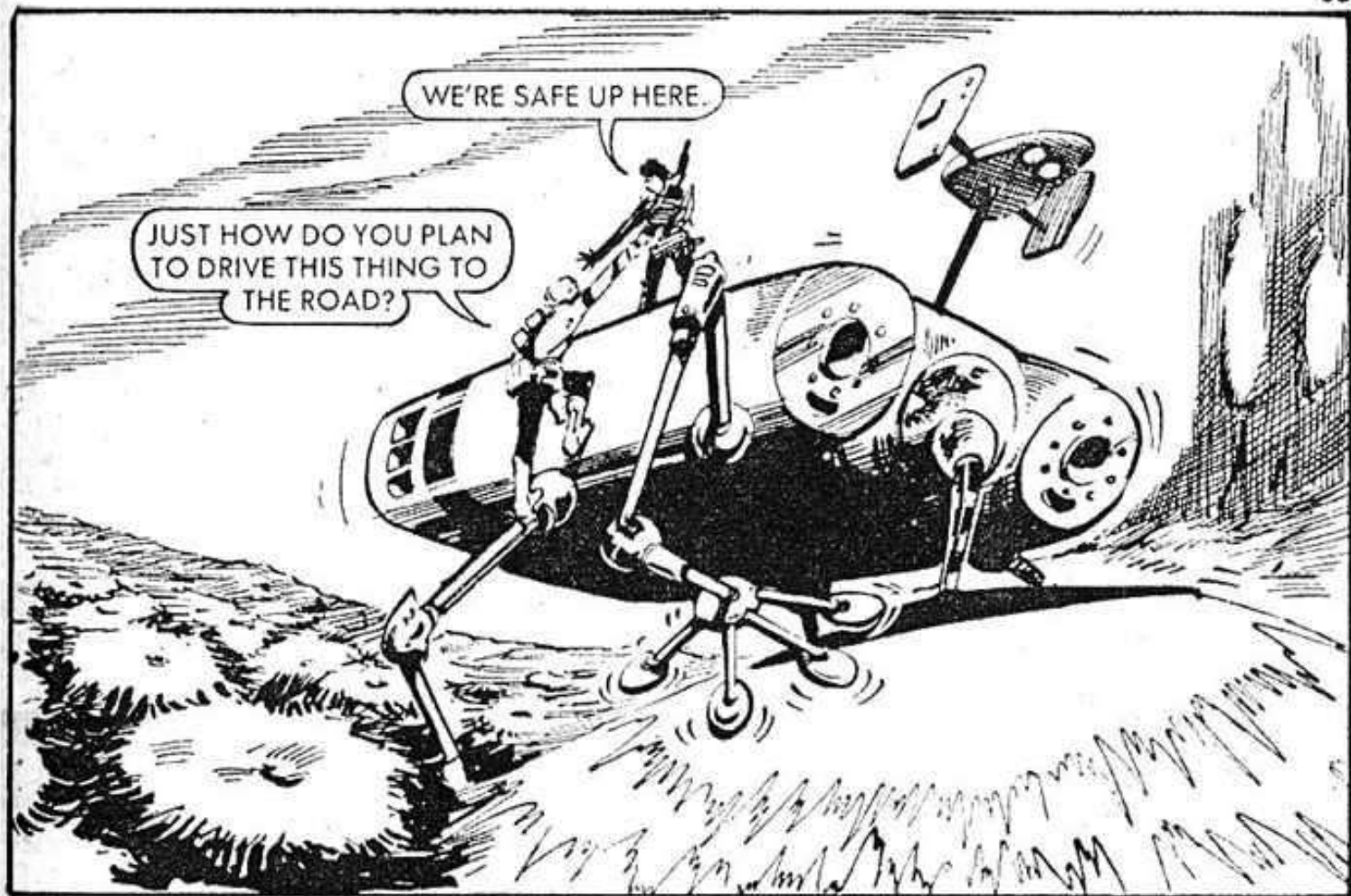
I RECKON IT'S ANOTHER TWENTY MILES TO THE ROAD.

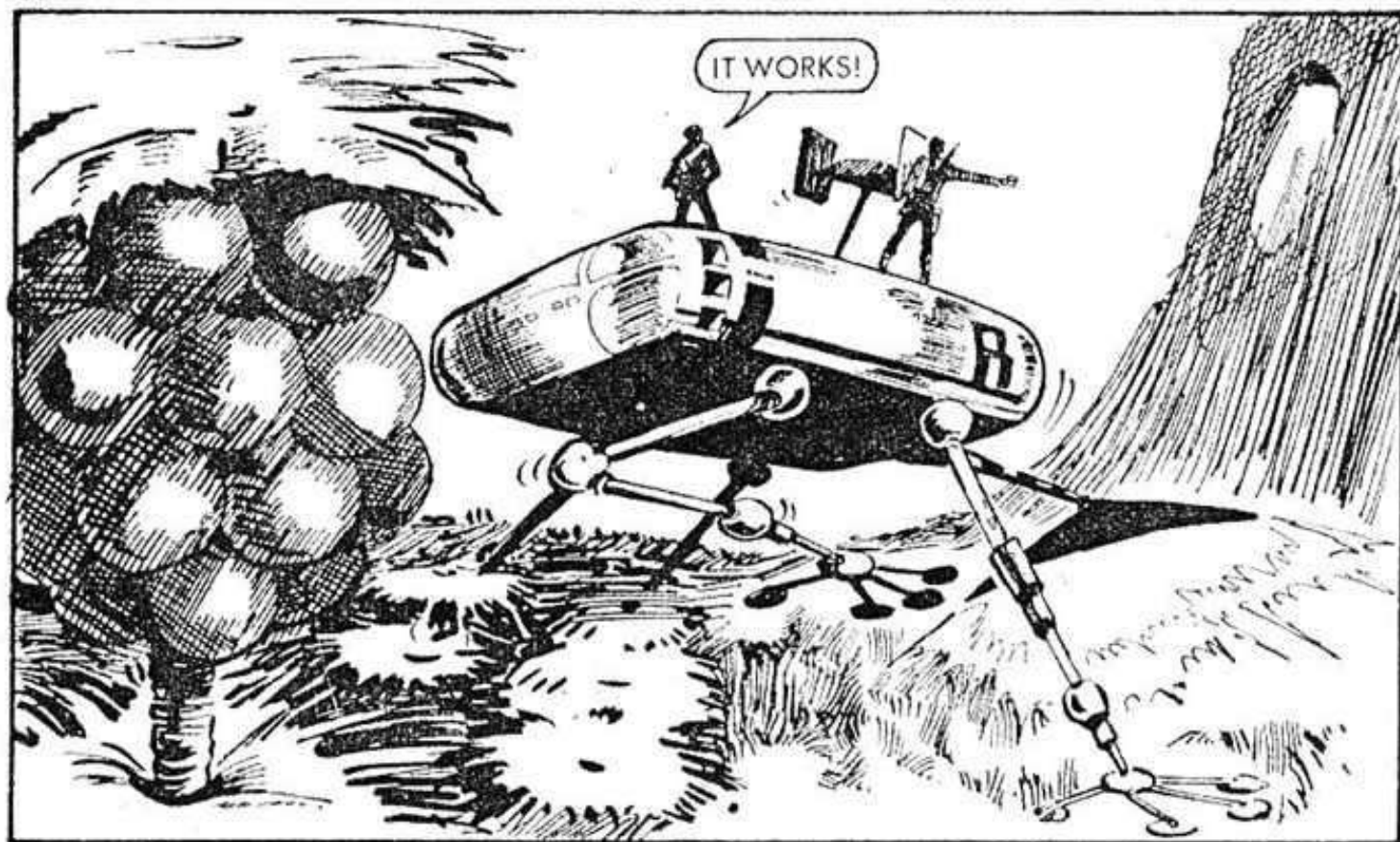
HEY! WHAT'S THAT HUMMING NOISE?



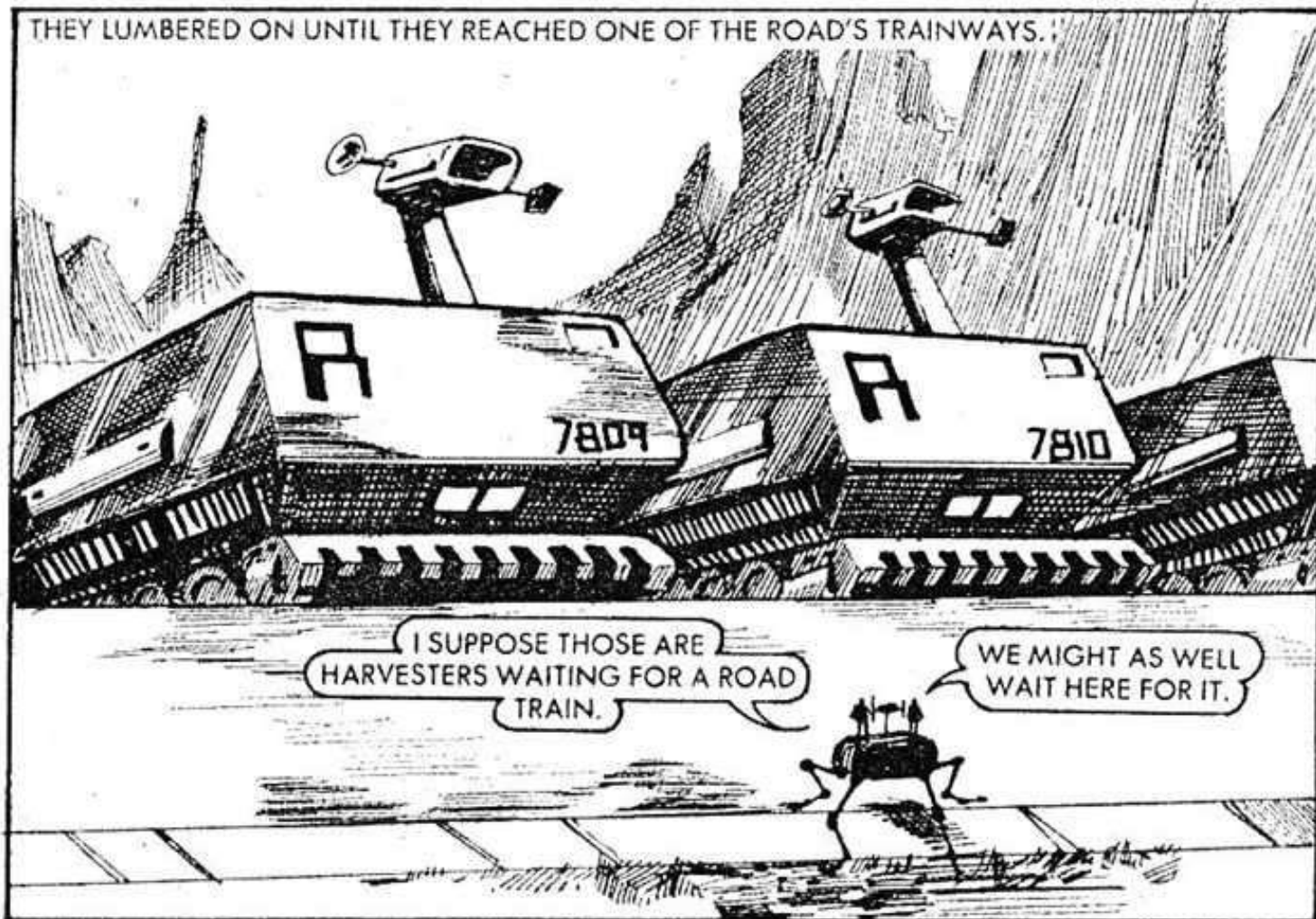




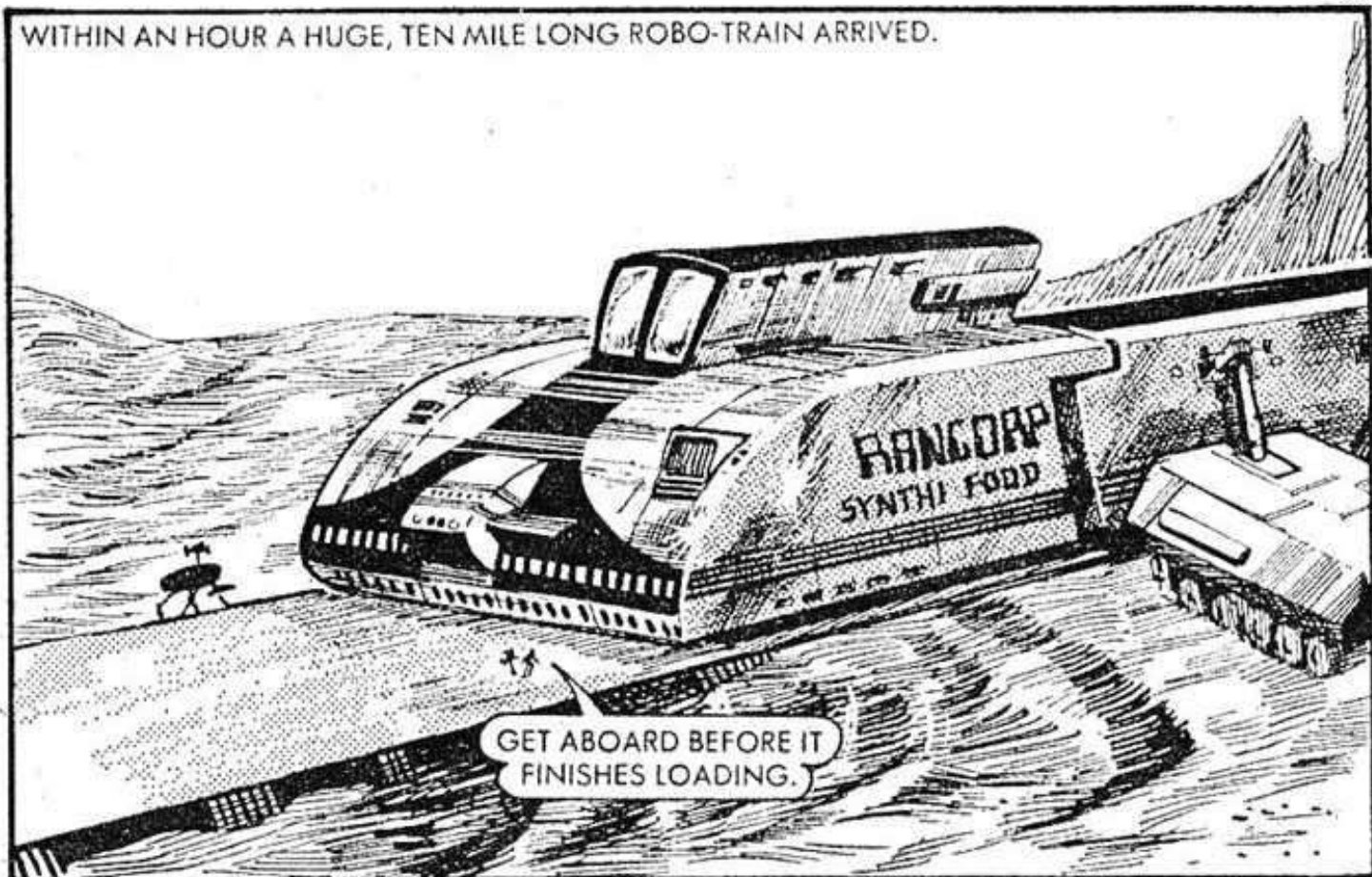




THEY LUMBERED ON UNTIL THEY REACHED ONE OF THE ROAD'S TRAINWAYS.

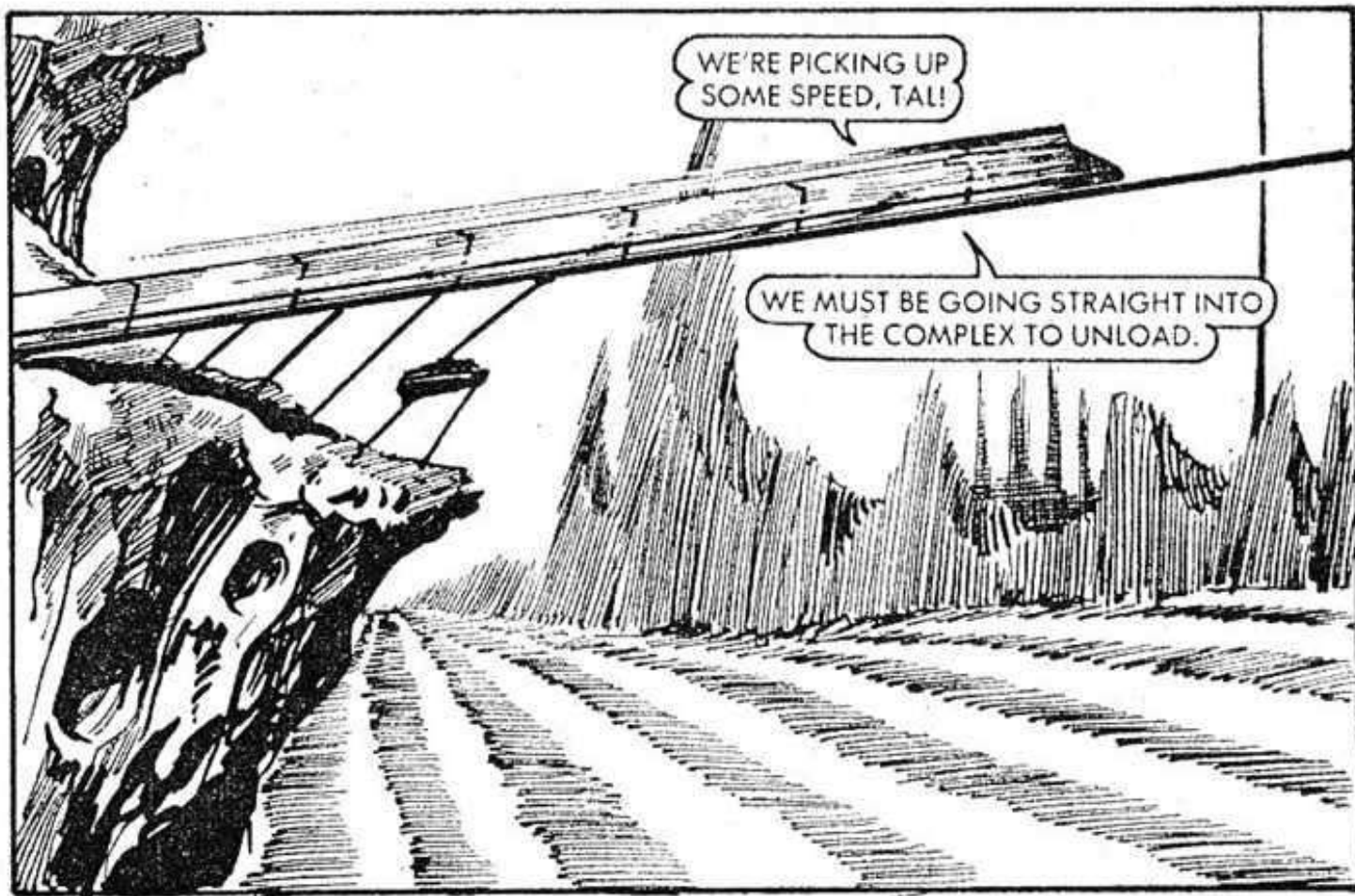


WITHIN AN HOUR A HUGE, TEN MILE LONG ROBO-TRAIN ARRIVED.

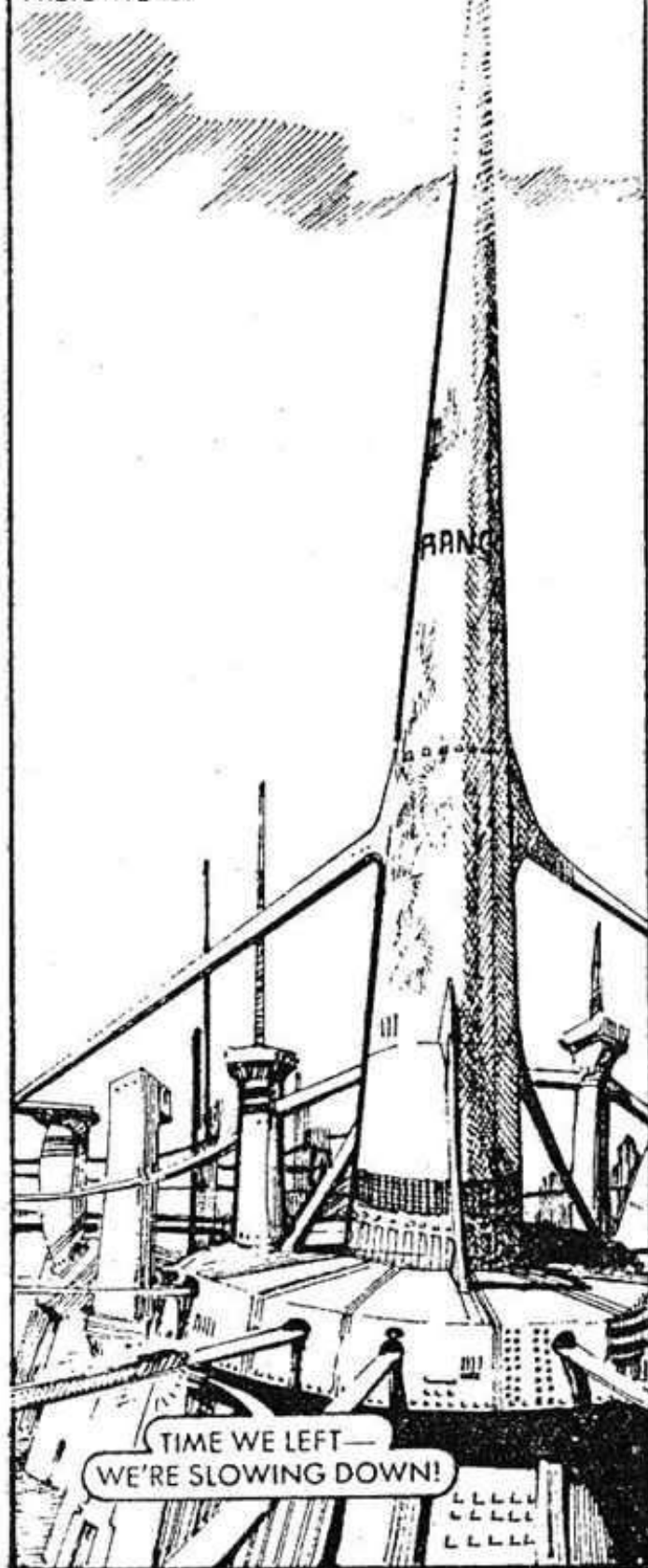


WE'RE PICKING UP
SOME SPEED, TAL!

WE MUST BE GOING STRAIGHT INTO
THE COMPLEX TO UNLOAD.



THEY ARRIVED AT THE COMPLEX
DOMINATED BY ITS STAR-LIFT WHICH
CARRIED FOOD FIVE HUNDRED MILES
UP INTO SPACE TO A TERMINAL
WHERE IT WAS LOADED ONTO WAITING
FREIGHTERS.



THEY LEAPT FROM THE TRAIN AND FLOATED DOWN TO GROUND LEVEL ON THEIR GRAVITY DROGUES.



NOW OUR PROBLEMS REALLY BEGIN!
WE'VE NO PROOF THAT THE PEOPLE
HERE HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE
TRANS SOLAR DISASTER.

WE DON'T EVEN KNOW IF THE
DISASTER WAS NATURAL OR NOT. IF
SLOGR HADN'T PANICKED WHEN HE
SAW US, WE WOULDN'T EVEN BE
HERE.



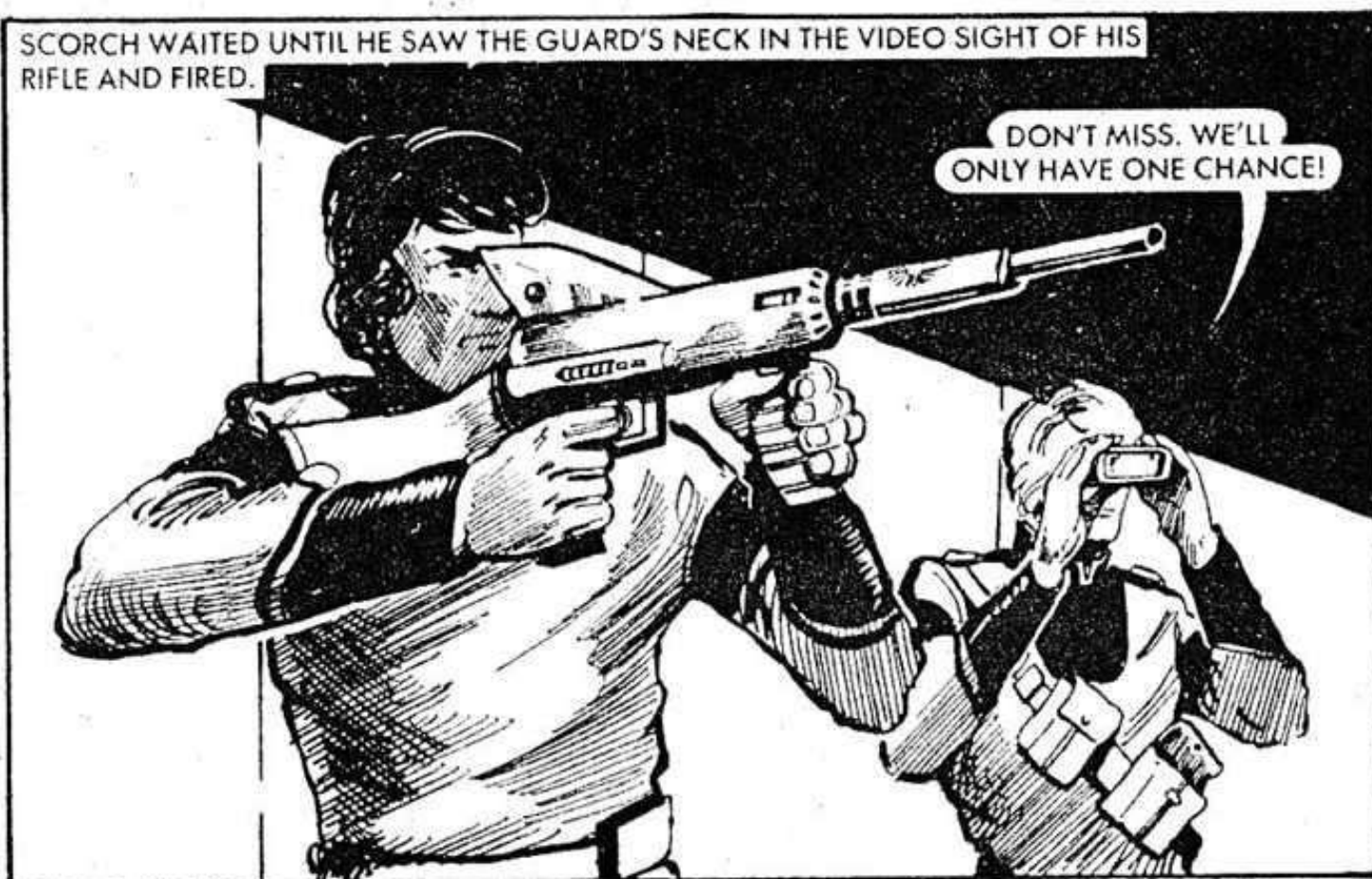


THEY SCOUTED THE COMPLEX UNTIL AT LAST THEY CAME TO THE SURFACE OF AN UNDERGROUND BUILDING.

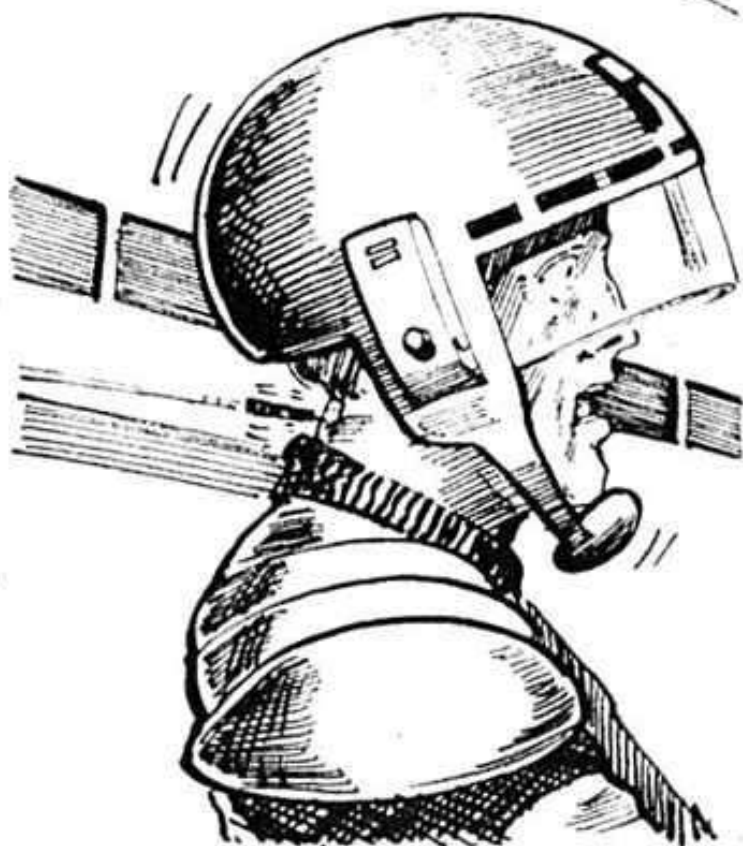




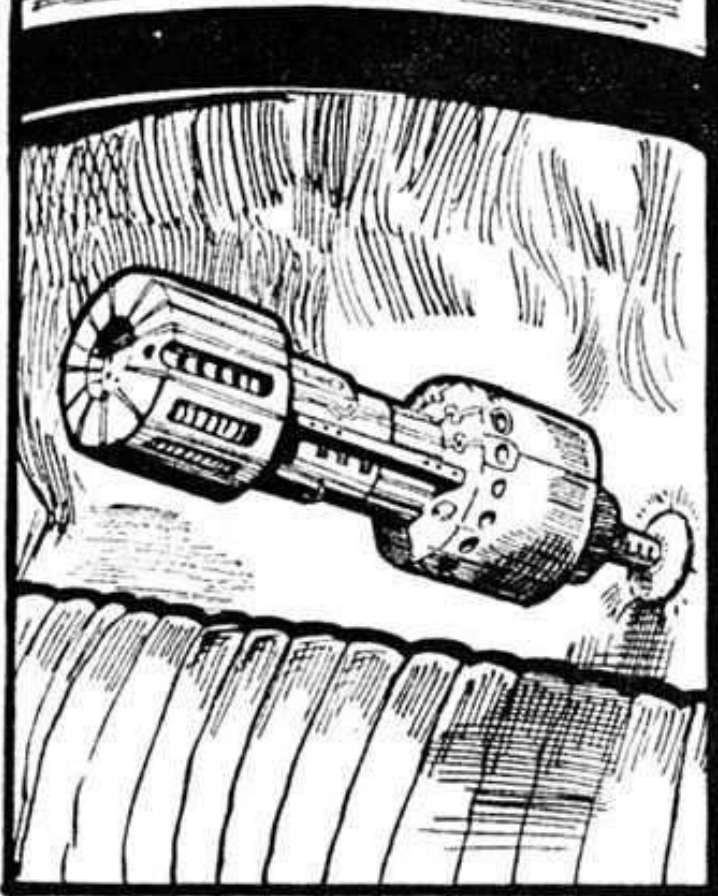
SCORCH WAITED UNTIL HE SAW THE GUARD'S NECK IN THE VIDEO SIGHT OF HIS RIFLE AND FIRED.



A HYPODERMIC DART STUCK IN THE GUARD'S NECK—INSTANTLY PARALYSING HIM, SO THAT HE STOOD FROZEN TO THE SPOT.



IT THEN BEGAN TO TRANSMIT A RECORDING OF THE GUARD'S BRAIN PATTERN.

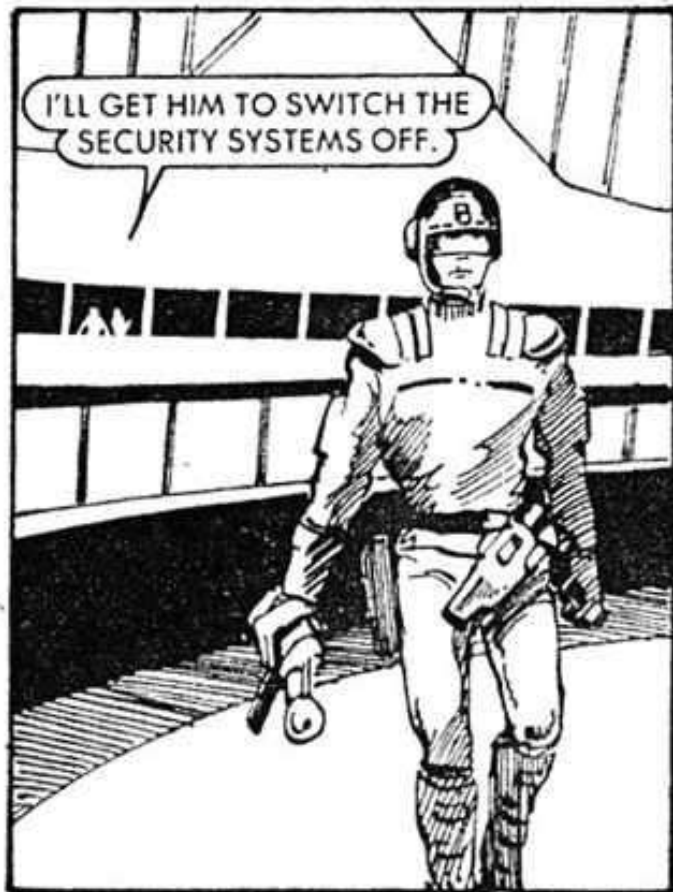


IS IT WORKING?

YES! I CAN FEED BACK SELECTED BRAIN IMPULSES AND RADIO CONTROL HIM.

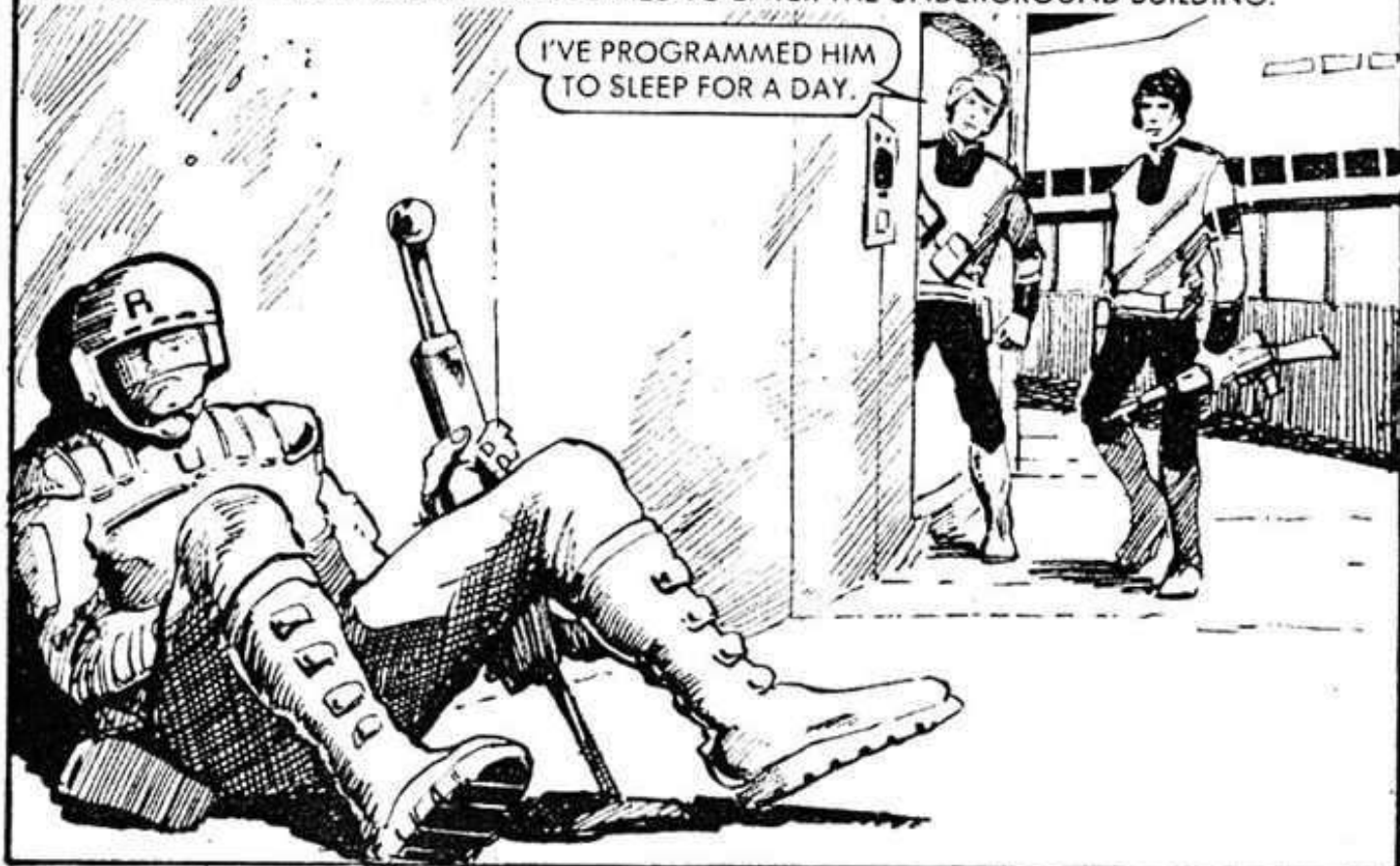


I'LL GET HIM TO SWITCH THE SECURITY SYSTEMS OFF.



A MINUTE LATER THE TWO AGENTS PREPARED TO ENTER THE UNDERGROUND BUILDING.

I'VE PROGRAMMED HIM
TO SLEEP FOR A DAY.



THIS LIFT GOES DOWN TO A COMPUTER
COMPLEX. IF THERE'S ANYTHING WORTH
GUARDING IT'LL BE IN THE COMPUTERS.



THEY FOUND THE COMPUTER TERMINAL ROOM DESERTED.

WE'LL START BY ASKING A FEW SIMPLE QUESTIONS LIKE—
WHAT'S THE PRIME FUNCTION OF THIS PLANET?

TO PRODUCE SYNTHI-HEALTH FOODS. THIS HAS ANTI-BIOTIC
PROPERTIES. IT BUILDS UP IN THE BODY GIVING
PROTECTION AGAINST ANY FORM OF DISEASE.

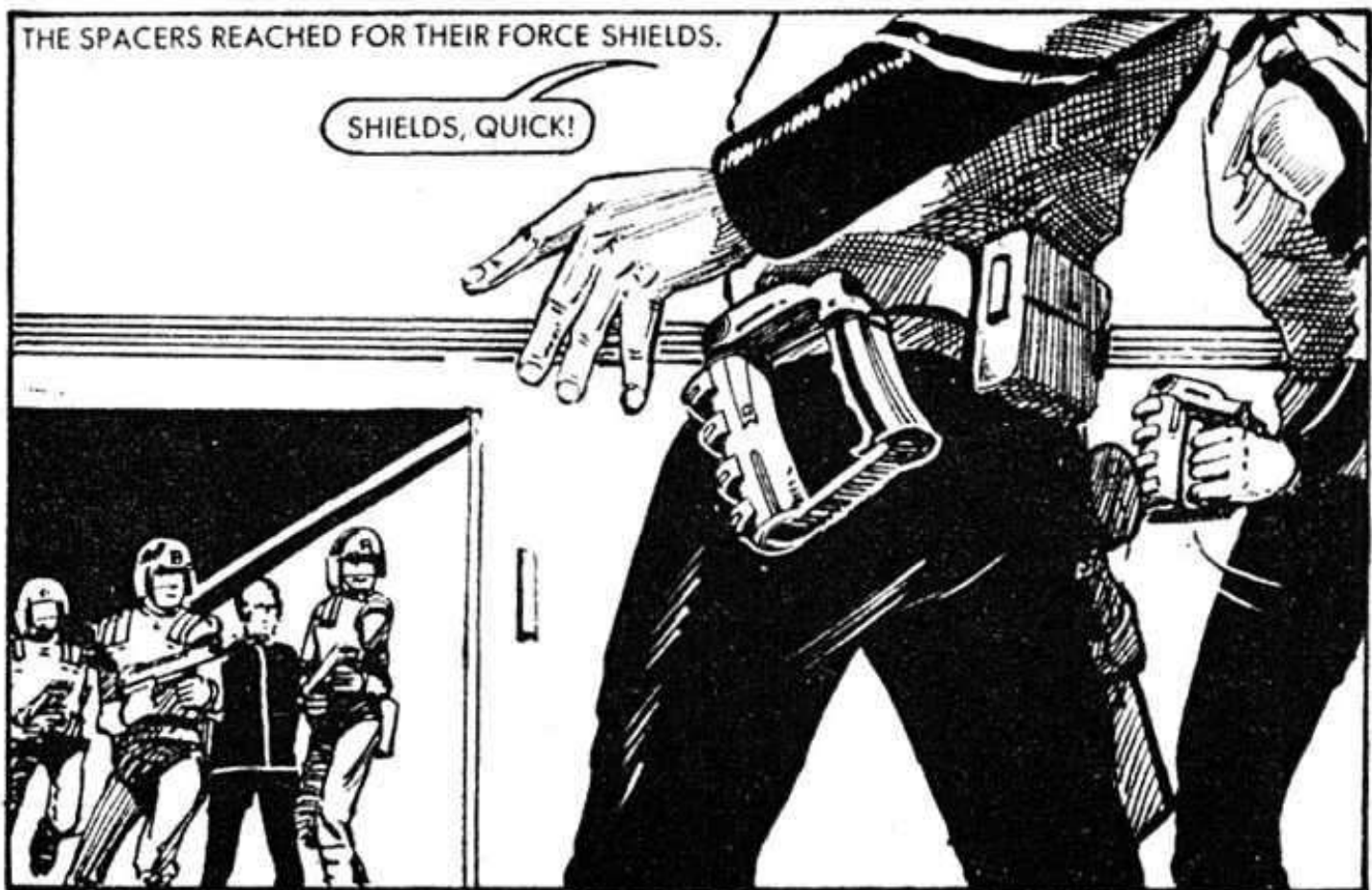
IT HAS BEEN USED BY ALL THE
CIVILISED RACES FOR THE LAST ONE
HUNDRED YEARS.

OF COURSE! IT WAS DEVELOPED
AFTER EXPLORERS BROUGHT BACK
THE GREAT PLAGUES THAT SWEEPED
THE KNOWN WORLDS A CENTURY
AGO!

IS THERE ANY CONNECTION
BETWEEN THIS PLANET AND THE
TRANS SOLAR LINER 2488?

THAT IS CLASSIFIED
INFORMATION STORED ONLY
IN THE 'Q' FILE.





AS THE GUARDS FIRED, THE FORCE SHIELDS ACTIVATED...



... AND REFLECTED THE BEAMS BACK.



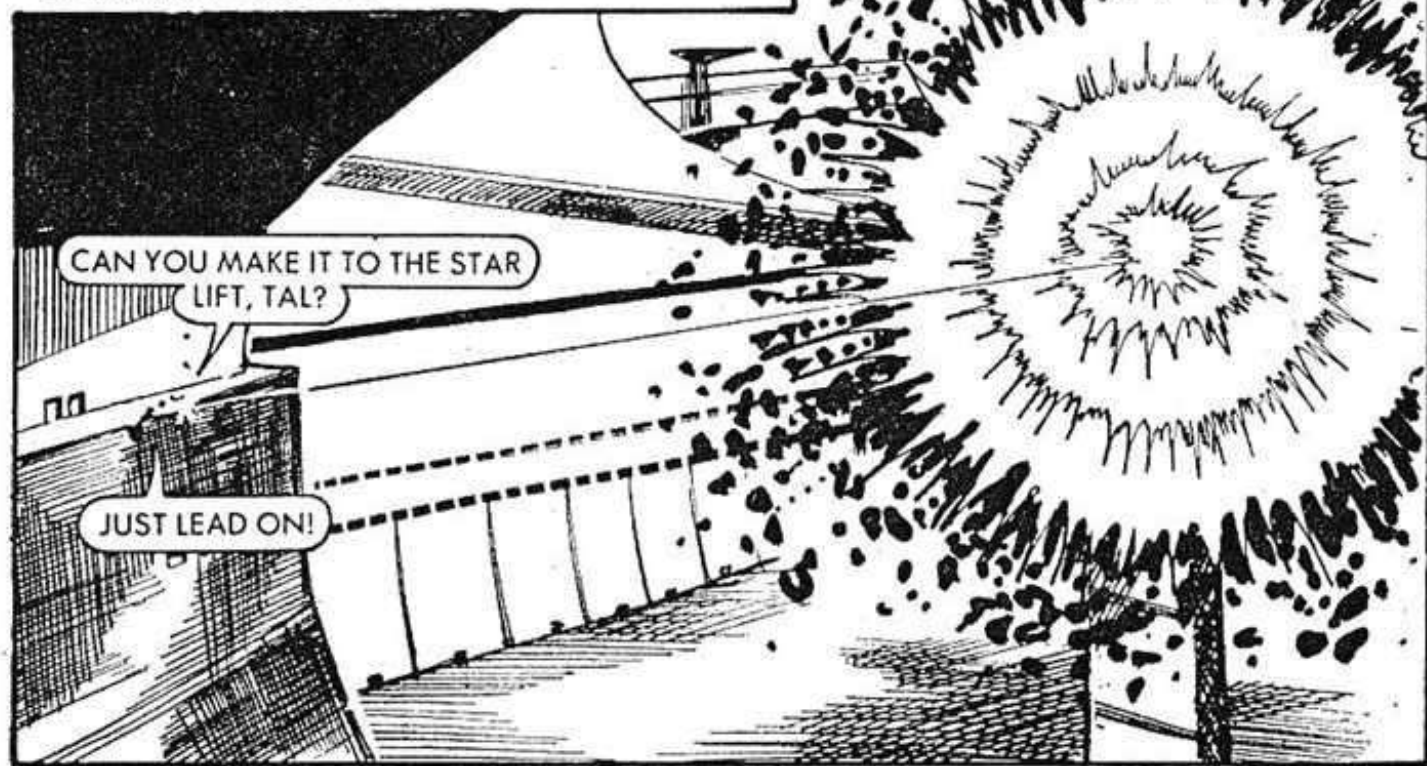






BEFORE TAL COULD CALL HE WAS BLASTED BACKWARDS AS THE WALL AND HIS RADIO
DISINTEGRATED.





THEY MADE THEIR WAY UNCHALLENGED
TO THE STAR LIFT.

WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO CALL THE
SHIP ON OUR COMMUNICATORS
ONCE WE GET INTO SPACE.

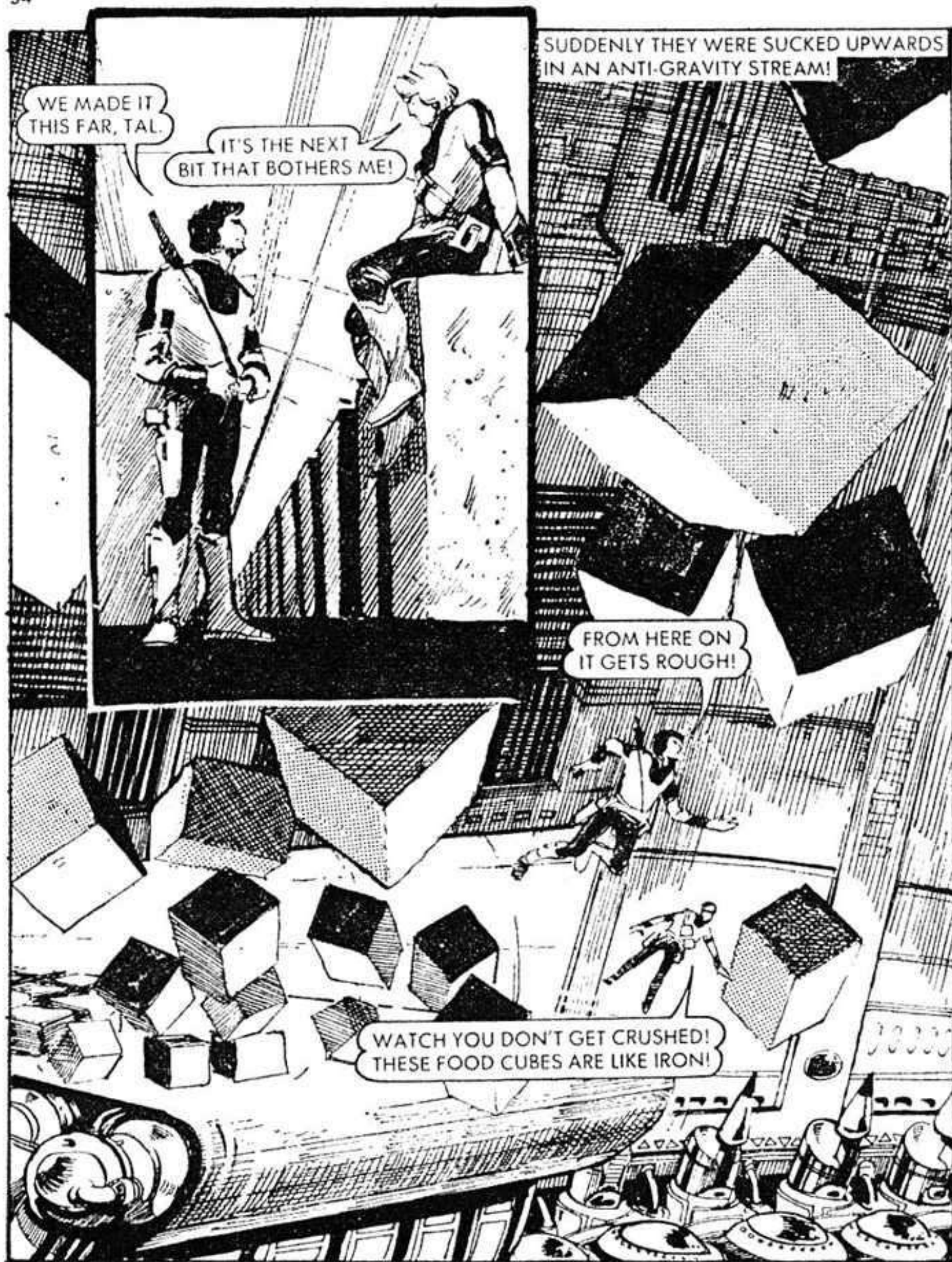
THAT MEANS GOING
UP IN THE STAR LIFT!

COME ON ... LET'S GET DOWN
THERE!



IN MINUTES THEY HAD CUT THROUGH THE METAL AND FOUND THEMSELVES LOOKING DOWN ON TO A HUGE CONVEYOR BELT.





SUDDENLY THEY WERE SUCKED UPWARDS
IN AN ANTI-GRAVITY STREAM!

WE MADE IT
THIS FAR, TAL.

IT'S THE NEXT
BIT THAT BOTHERS ME!

FROM HERE ON
IT GETS ROUGH!

WATCH YOU DON'T GET CRUSHED!
THESE FOOD CUBES ARE LIKE IRON!

FOR SEVERAL HOURS THEY ROSE IN TOTAL DARKNESS.

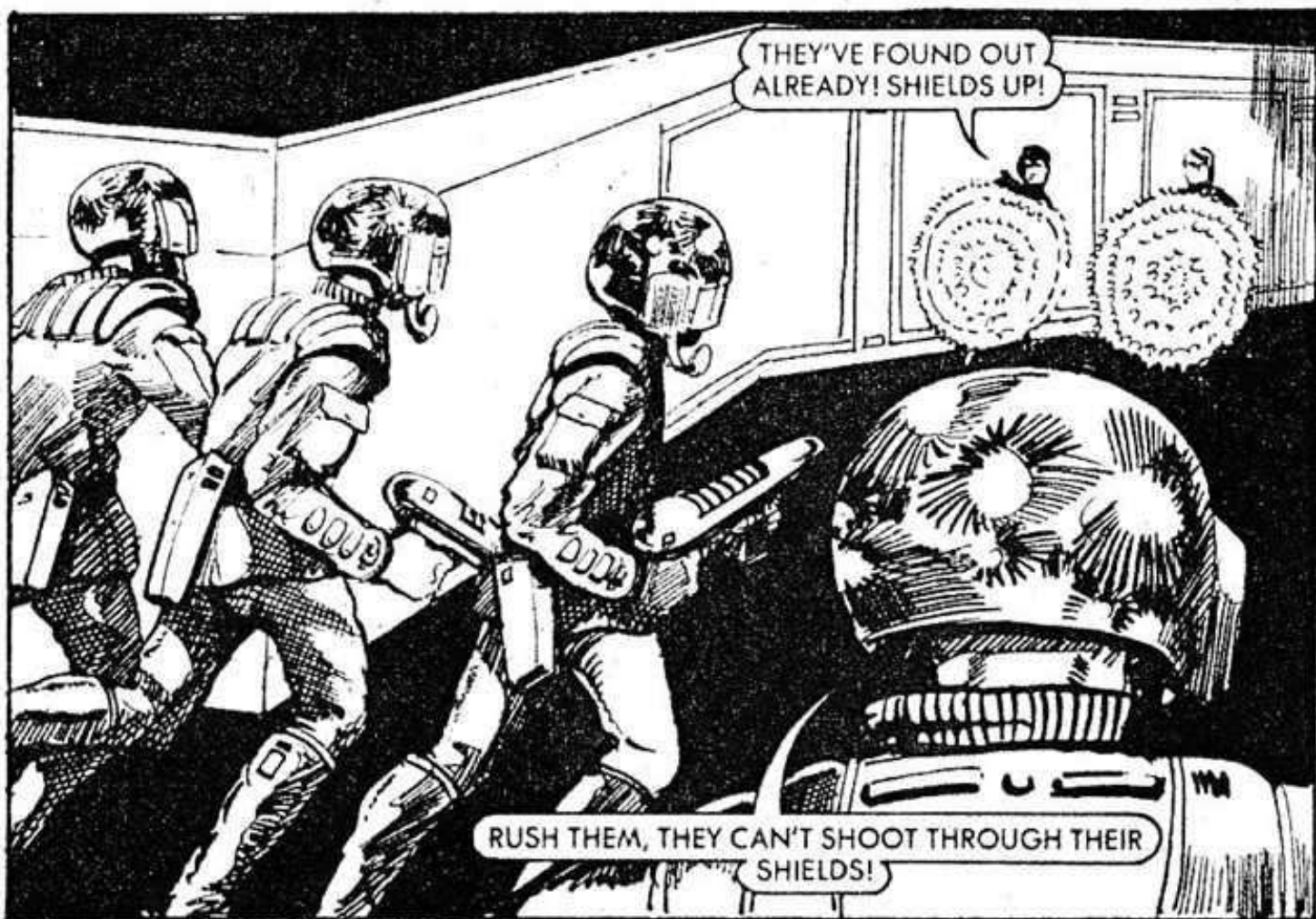




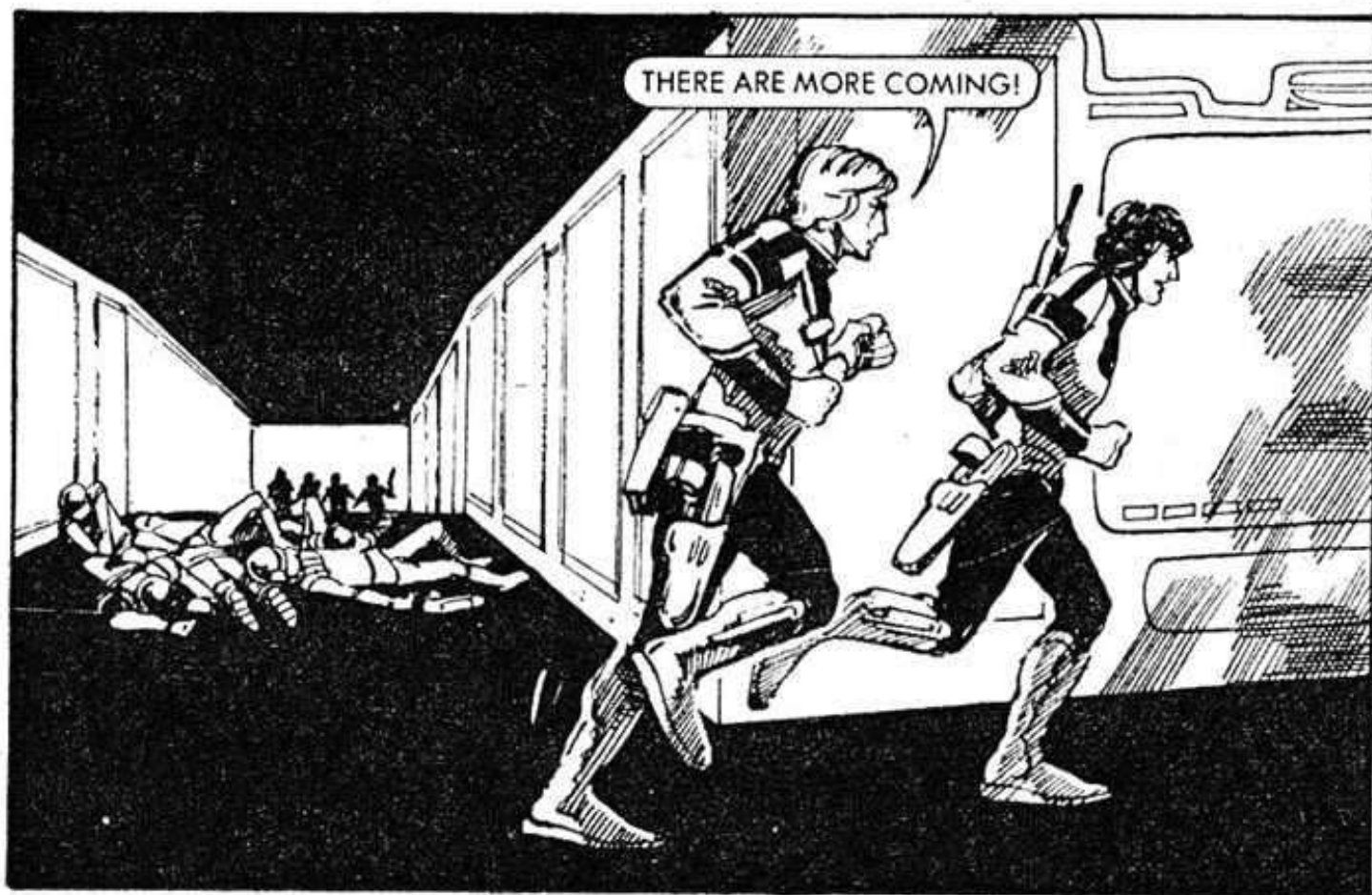
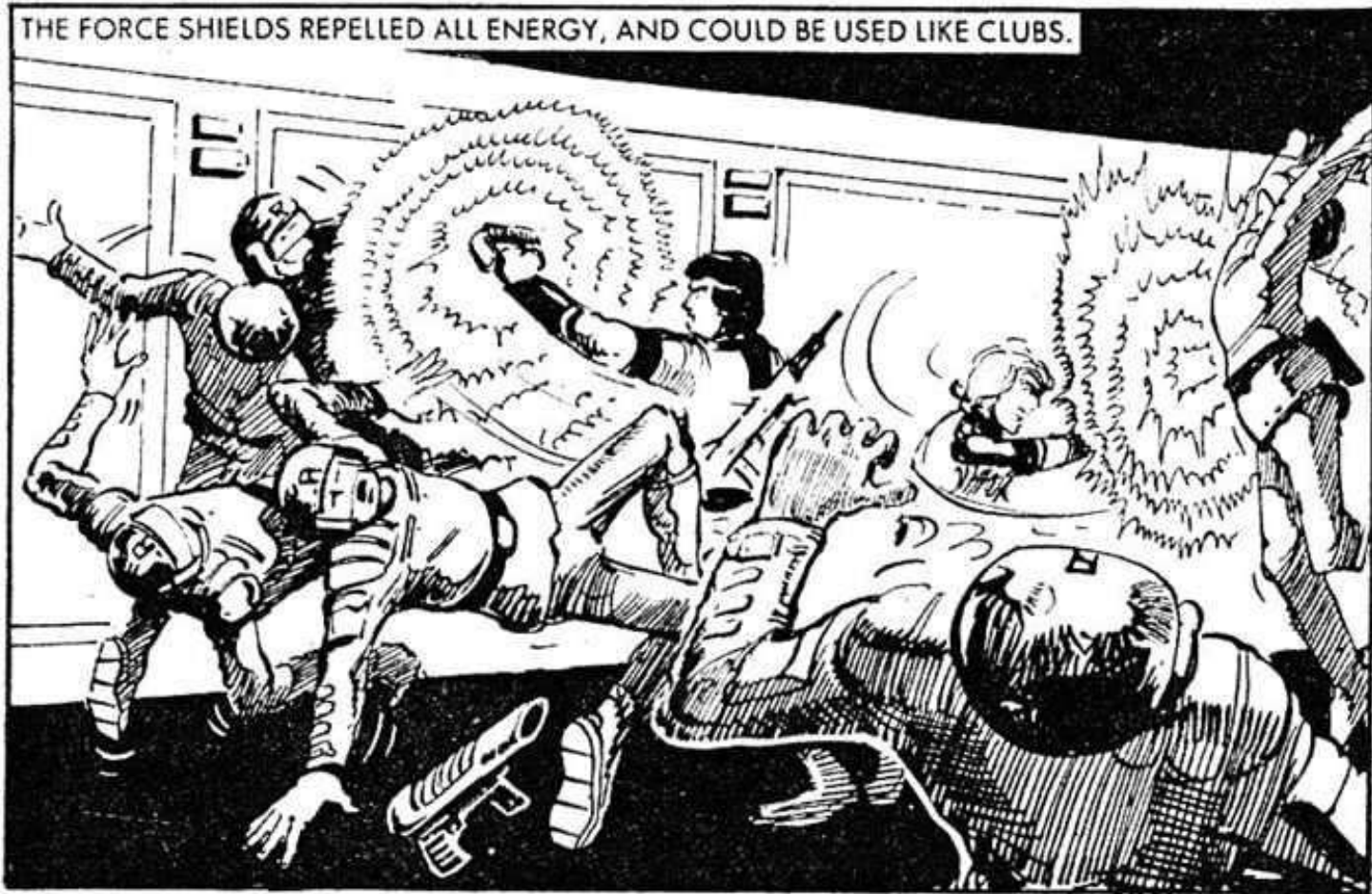
IN THE ARTIFICIAL GRAVITY STREAM THE DROGUES ACTED LIKE JETS LIFTING THEM OUT AND UPWARDS.

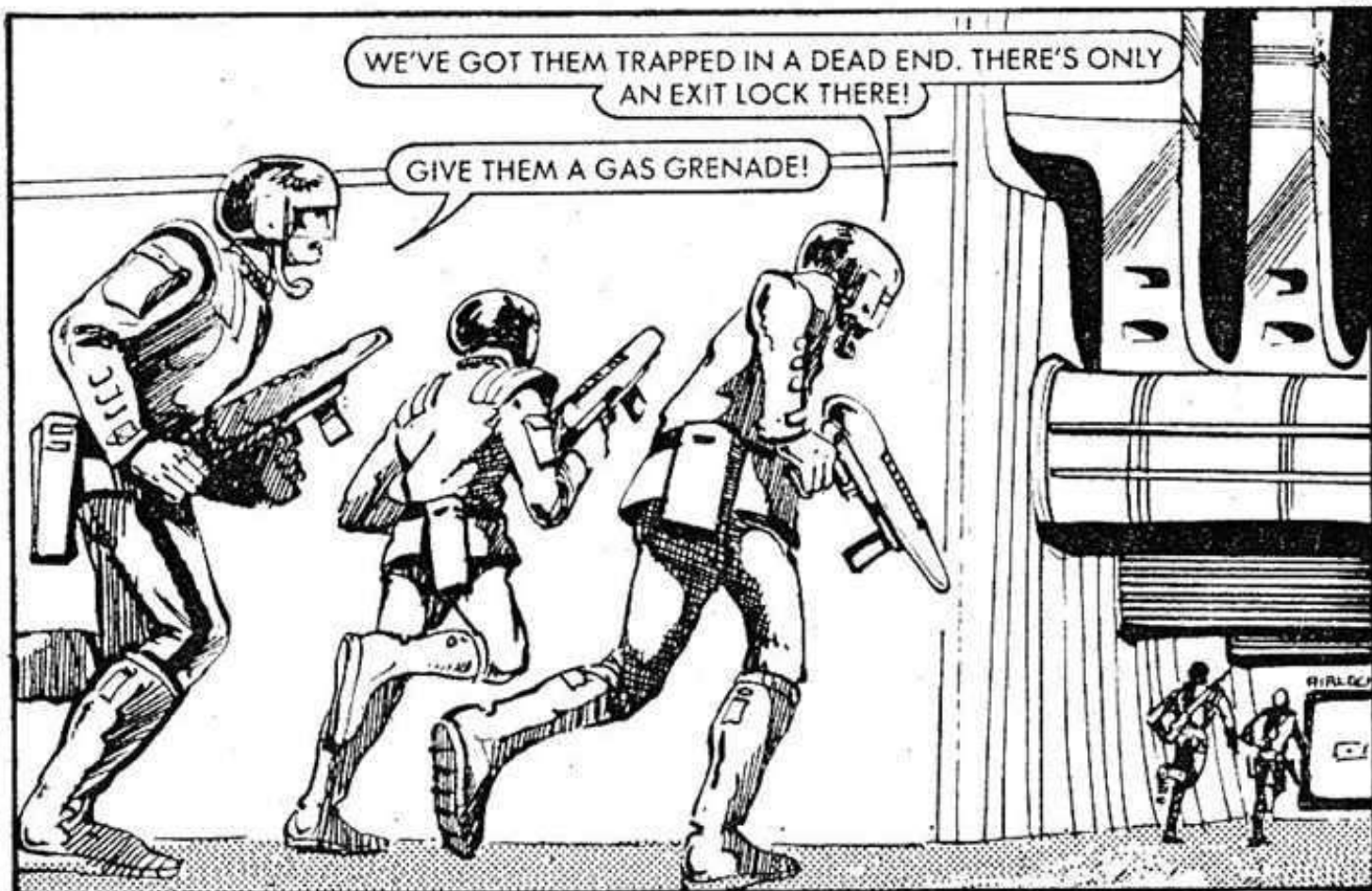
THERE'S AN INSPECTION HATCH UP HERE.





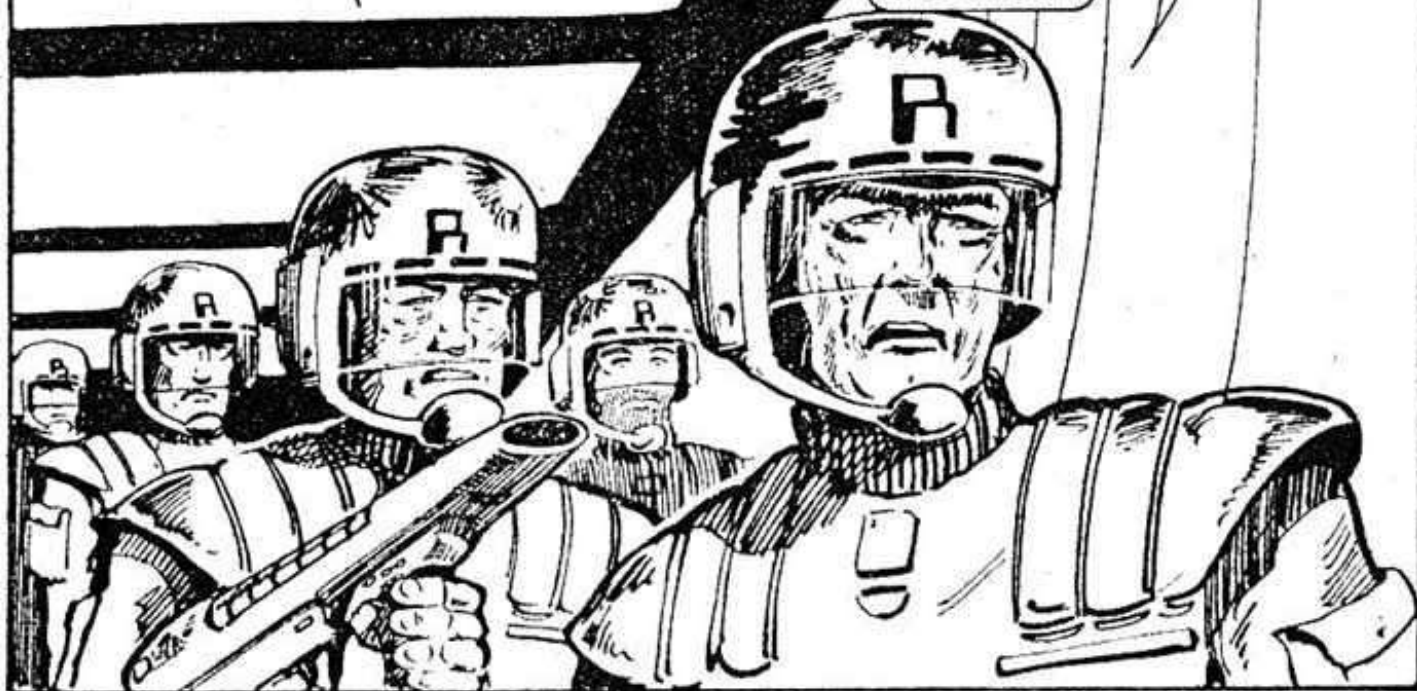
THE FORCE SHIELDS REPELLED ALL ENERGY, AND COULD BE USED LIKE CLUBS.





SHALL I BLOW THE DOOR OPEN?

NO NEED. THEY'VE WALKED INTO THEIR OWN COFFIN!
THEY HAVEN'T GOT SPACESUITS SO WE'LL JUST LET ALL
THE AIR OUT!



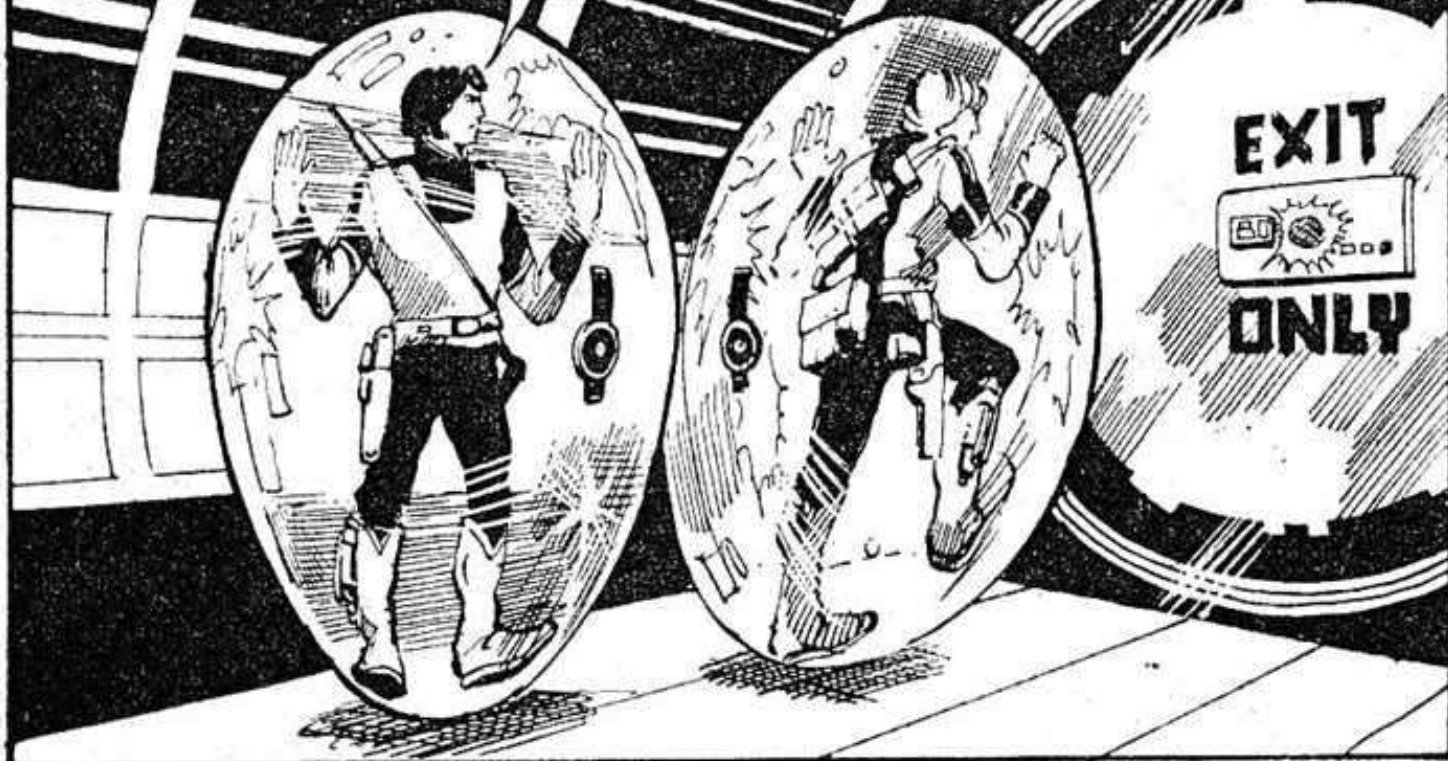
BUT INSIDE THE LOCK THE TWO AGENTS UNFOLDED TWO PLASTOSTEEL BAGS FROM
THEIR WEAPONS BELTS.

TIME TO GET INTO
OUR SURVIVAL BAGS.

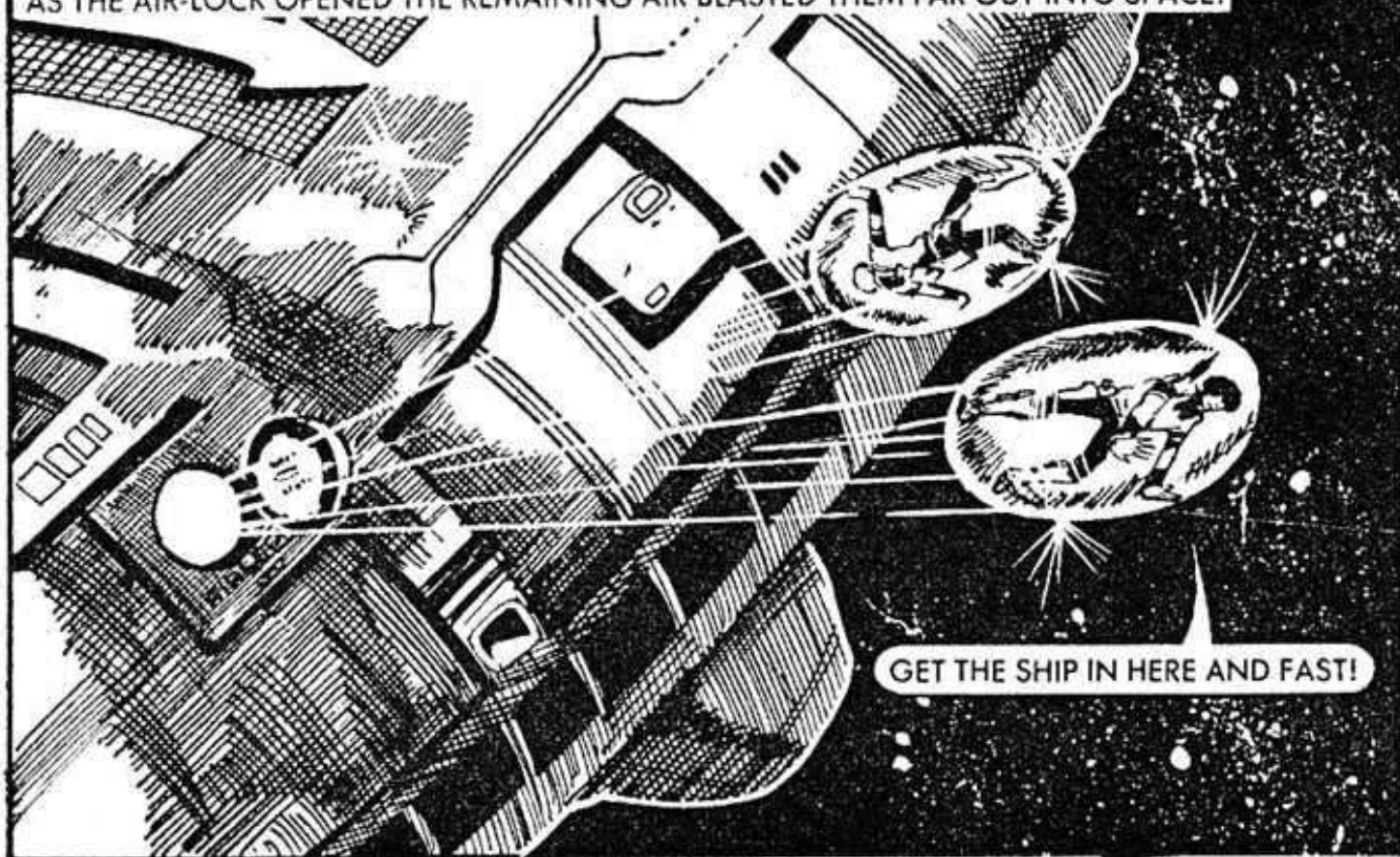


THE BAGS SELF-SEALED AND THEN INFLATED AROUND THEM SETTING INTO A STEEL-HARD SHELL.

IF THAT LOCK DOESN'T OPEN WE'LL BE HELPLESS.

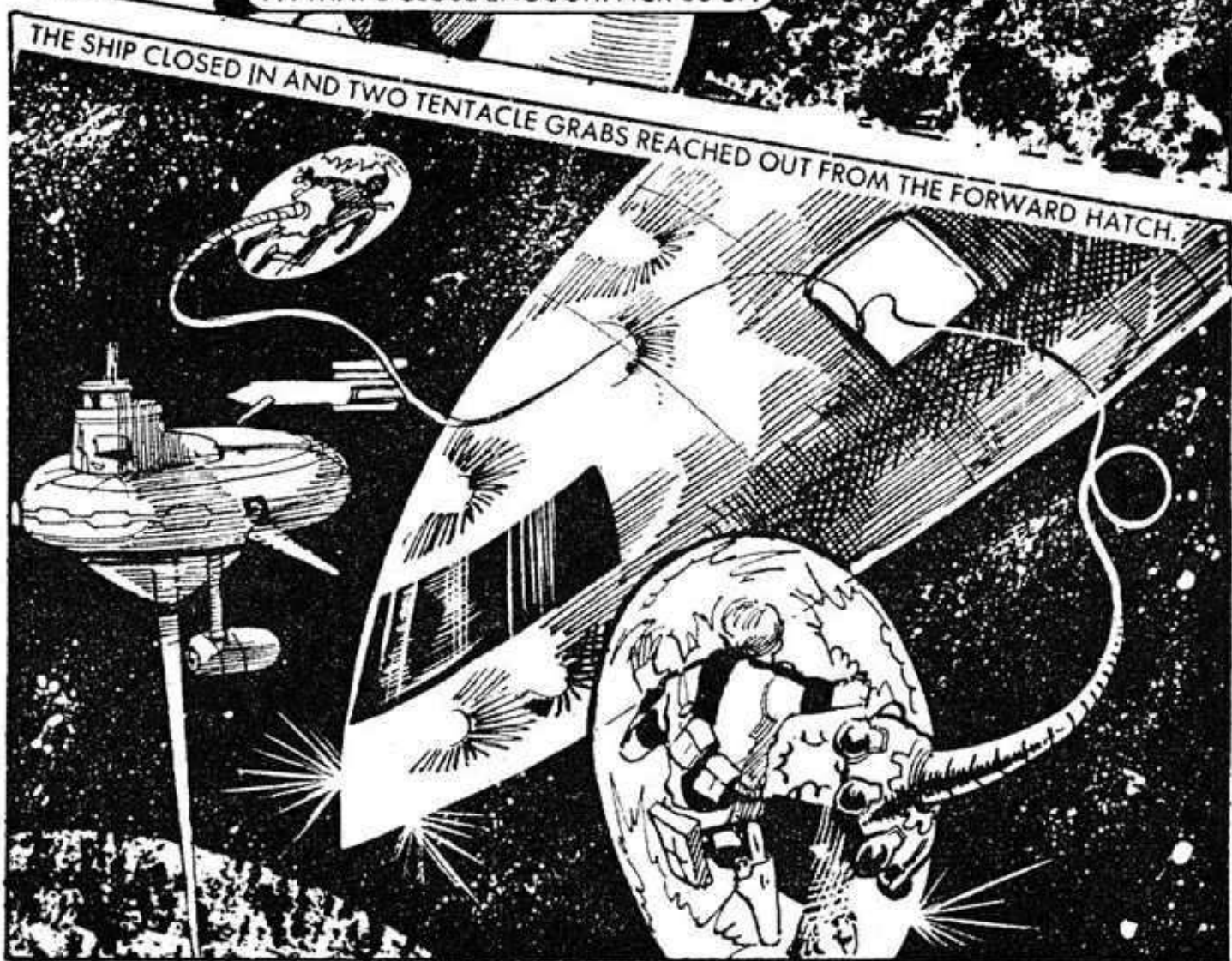


AS THE AIR-LOCK OPENED THE REMAINING AIR BLASTED THEM FAR OUT INTO SPACE!



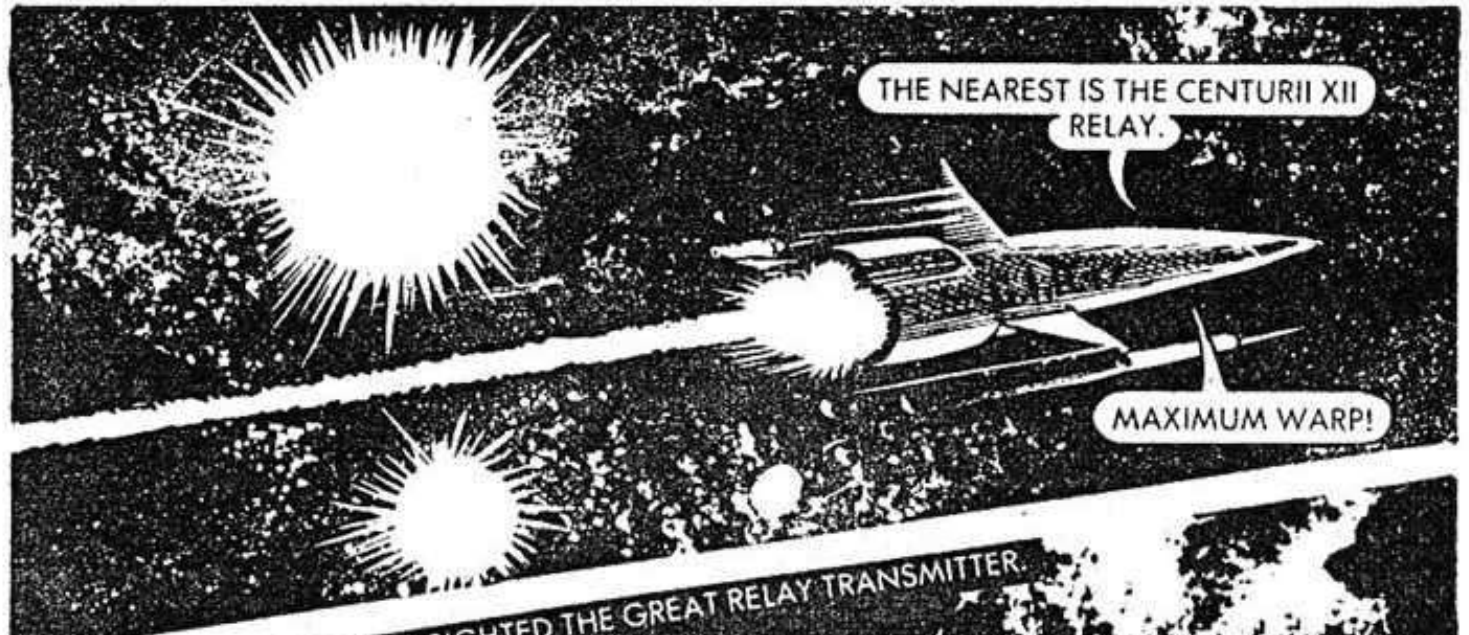


... THAT'S CLOSE ENOUGH! PICK US UP.



THE SHIP CLOSED IN AND TWO TENTACLE GRABS REACHED OUT FROM THE FORWARD HATCH.



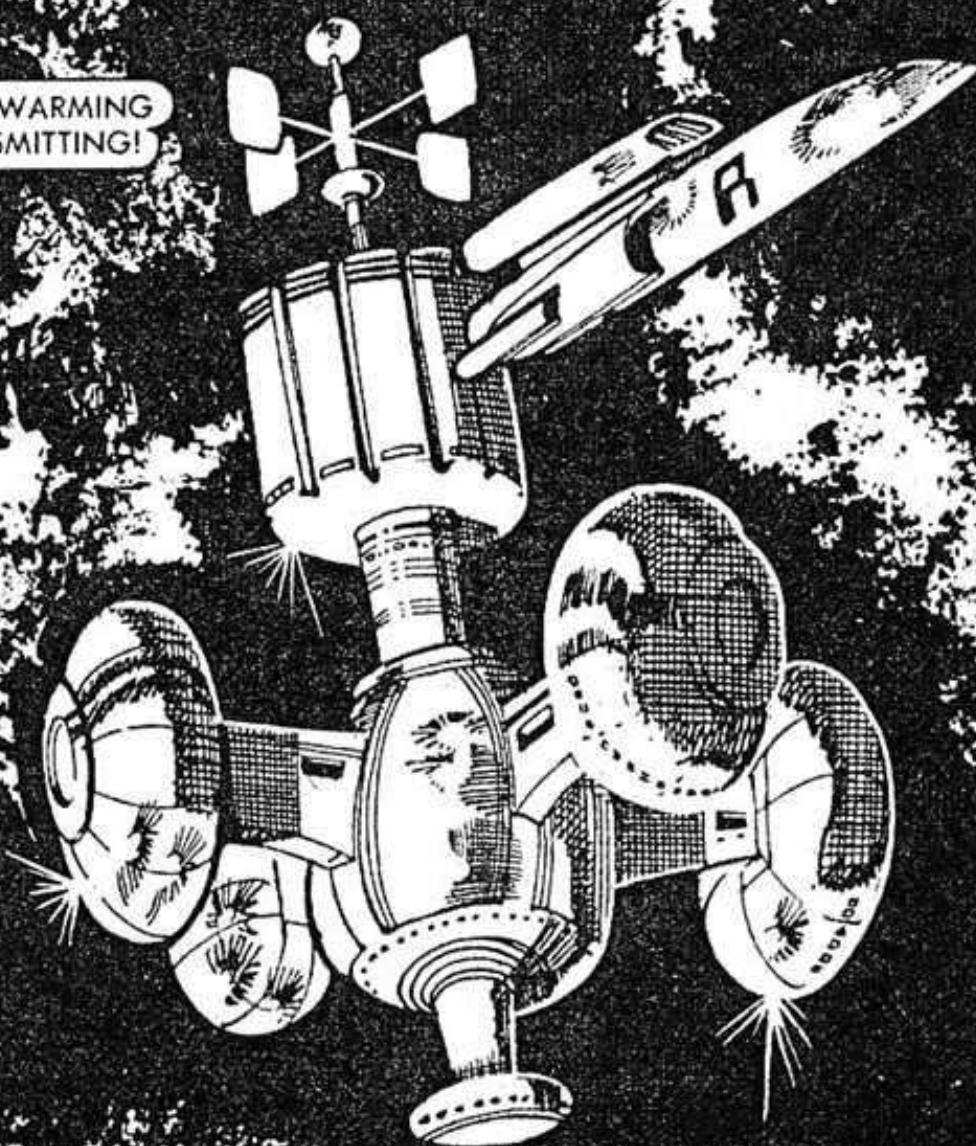


THE NEAREST IS THE CENTURII XII RELAY.

MAXIMUM WARP!

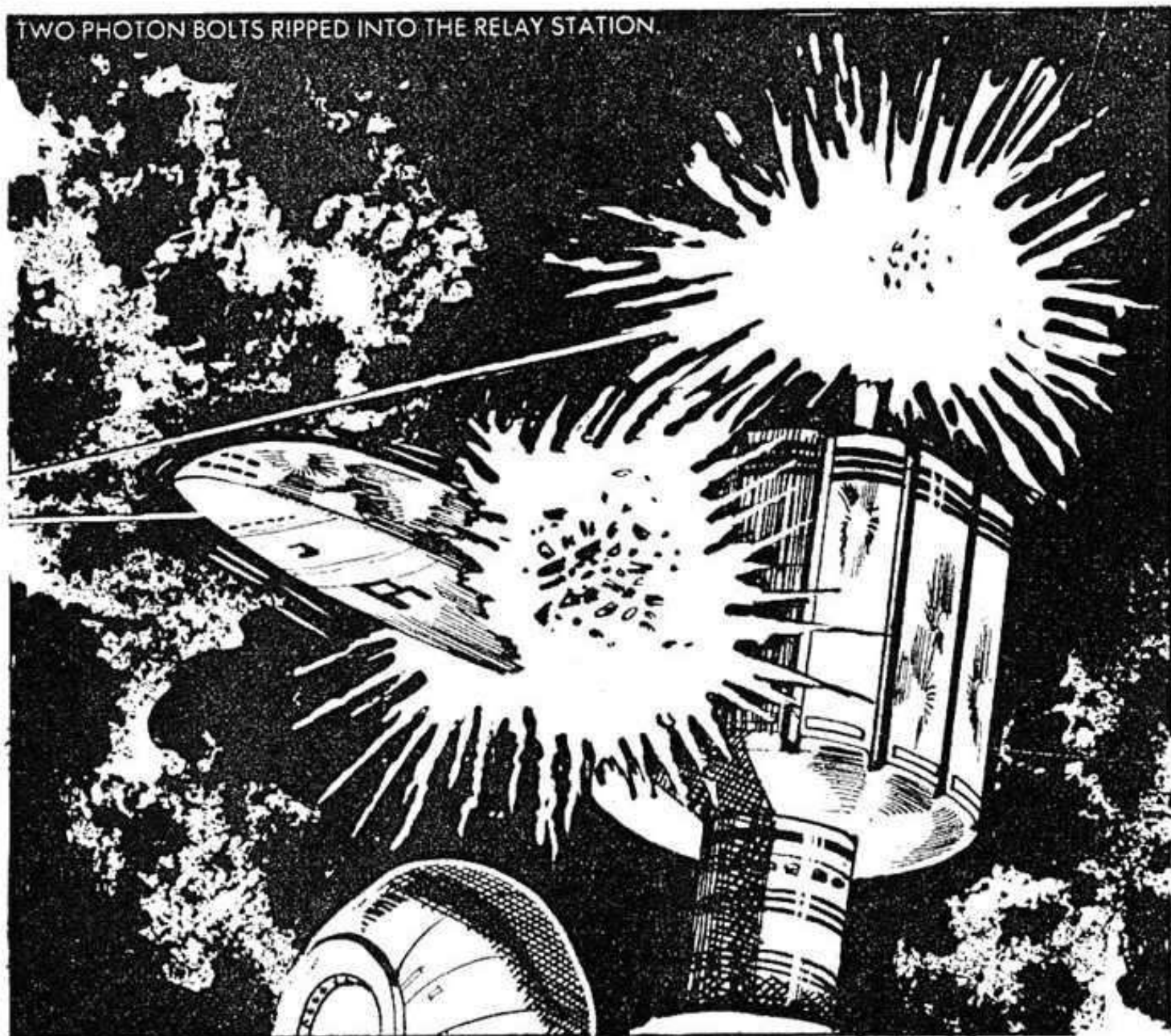
TWELVE HOURS LATER THEY SIGHTED THE GREAT RELAY TRANSMITTER

THERE IT IS. THEY'RE WARMING UP TO START TRANSMITTING!



FIRE GUNS! RELAY AERIAL AND SHIP!

TWO PHOTON BOLTS RIPPED INTO THE RELAY STATION.



WHEN THE BLAST CLEARED THERE WAS NO SIGN OF THE FREIGHTER OR AERIAL.

THAT'S THE END OF RANCORP'S GAME.
NOW WE'LL HAVE TO ROUND UP THE REST
OF THEM.

YES! AND I BET
THEY'LL BE SICK.

**NOW THAT YOU'VE READ
THIS**



**DON'T
FORGET
THAT
THERE'S
ANOTHER
ONE THIS
MONTH**

**IT'S ON SALE IN
YOUR NEWSAGENT'S NOW!**

STARBLAZERS

IN THE CONQUEST OF SPACE 38

Philadelphia

Baltimore

Delaware Bay

Washington D.C.

Chesapeake Bay

In July 1972, the Americans launched the first Earth Resources Technology Satellite, originally called ERTS, named Landsat. This satellite took high quality photos through different filters enabling man to study the available resources on Earth on a wide scale. The photograph here is the east coast of America showing Washington D.C. and Chesapeake Bay.